

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

1690s The Great Storm of Hurstwood.

In the small village of Hurstwood, nestled amidst the rolling hills of England, Edmund Tattersall lived a quiet and peaceful life. The year was 1690s, a time when the whispers of the supernatural still lingered in the air, and people lived closely connected to nature's rhythms. Little did Edmund know that he was about to witness a force of nature so powerful that it would be etched into the memories of generations to come.

It was a cold winter's night when the first gusts of wind began to stir. The villagers huddled in their homes, seeking warmth and security from the impending storm. The wind whispered ominously through the cracks in the doors and rattled the windows, as if foretelling the chaos that was about to be unleashed upon them.

As midnight approached, the wind grew stronger, gradually escalating into a fearsome tempest. The howling gale tore through the countryside, uprooting trees that had stood for centuries. The once peaceful landscape was transformed into a battleground of swirling debris and crashing branches.

In the neighboring villages of Extwistle and Worsthorne, the fury of the storm was particularly intense. Terrified by the relentless roaring, the villagers fled their homes, seeking refuge in churches and other sturdy structures. The wind's relentless onslaught showed no mercy, unsating houses and tearing apart shippens, leaving the inhabitants in a state of shock and despair.

As the storm raged on, something peculiar happened. The wind, originating from the west, carried with it an otherworldly presence. The trees, stripped of their leaves, were coated with a thick crust of salt, as if the storm had come from the depths of the ocean itself. And then, against the backdrop of the darkened sky, a magnificent flock of sea gulls soared overhead, their cries mingling with the cacophony of the tempest. It was an eerie sight that both fascinated and unsettled those who witnessed it.

Edmund Tattersall, a man of deep curiosity and a love for nature's mysteries, braved the storm to observe this extraordinary phenomenon. Clutching his father's Bible tightly in his hands, he ventured out into the chaos, seeking answers and solace amidst the tempest's fury.

With each step, Edmund battled against the relentless gusts, his coat billowing behind him like a flag of resilience. He made his way to the top of Extwistle Hill, a vantage point overlooking the village and the surrounding countryside. There, he stood, breathless and awe-struck, as the storm unleashed its full might.

The sea gulls, their feathers glistening with salt, soared gracefully above him. Their flight seemed both majestic and determined, as if they possessed a purpose known only to the elements themselves. Edmund felt a profound connection to these creatures, as if their presence held a hidden message from the forces of nature.

In that moment, as the wind whipped around him and the sea gulls danced in the sky, Edmund experienced a profound revelation. He realized that, just like the storm, life could be unpredictable and uncontrollable. But within the chaos, there was also beauty and wonder, waiting to be discovered by those who dared to venture out and seek it.

From that day forward, Edmund Tattersall became known as a fearless explorer, delving into the mysteries of the natural world. He chronicled his findings in his father's Bible, ensuring that the stories of the great storm and its sea gulls would be passed down through the generations.

And so, the tale of the great storm became a legend in Hurstwood, a reminder of the power and unpredictability of nature. It served as a testament to the resilience of its inhabitants, who, like Edmund, learned to embrace the storms of life.

By Donald Jay

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A LUDDITE LEADER

In the small village of Marsden-in-Saddleworth, located in the West Riding Yorkshire, a group of cloth workers and finishers came together in the year 1812. Frustrated by the introduction of new machinery that threatened their livelihoods, they formed a secret society with the sole purpose of destroying the machines that were bringing about their downfall. Their actions sparked a series of riots that spread throughout the district, targeting the mills of the manufacturers.

Under the cover of darkness, the rioters attacked the mills, wreaking havoc and causing destruction. Chaos ensued, and the once peaceful village was filled with fear and uncertainty. The manufacturers offered substantial rewards for the capture of the individuals responsible for the attacks, hoping to bring an end to the violence and protect their businesses.

Amidst the turmoil, a young man arrived at a lonely public house at the bottom of "Stony Bonk." He appeared weary and worn-out, seeking refuge for the night. The next morning, instead of rushing to continue his journey, he lingered, inquiring about work opportunities among the local farmers. The innkeeper, observing his reluctance to interact with strangers, grew curious about the newcomer.

One day, a traveler from Yorkshire stopped by the inn during lunchtime. Engrossed in the recent news, he pulled out a newspaper and began reading aloud the accounts of the Luddite apprehensions. As the young man listened intently, a sudden change came over his face—a chilling pallor and a look of fear. Sensing something amiss, the traveler became suspicious of the young man's reaction.

Dropping his knife and fork, the young man's secrets seemed exposed. The traveler made a swift decision to act upon his intuition without revealing his suspicions to anyone. He immediately set off for Heptonstall, a nearby village, to locate the constable and share his story. Together, they returned to the inn, determined to confront the mysterious stranger.

The constable, armed with the traveler's account, approached the young man and informed him of the accusations. Faced with undeniable evidence, the young man confessed to his participation in the destructive riots. Recognized by others who had witnessed his involvement, he was taken into custody and eventually stood trial in York. The trial was swift, and the young man, along with fourteen or fifteen others, was found guilty of his crimes. The penalty for their actions was death. The hangings served as a grim reminder of the consequences of participating in such foolish and destructive riots. The village of Marsden-in-Saddleworth slowly began to heal in the aftermath of the Luddite uprising. The manufacturers, though relieved by the capture and punishment of the guilty parties, remained cautious and continued to implement the new machinery that had sparked the unrest. The cloth workers and finishers faced a changing world, one where technology increasingly played a role in their trade.

Over time, the Luddite riots became a cautionary tale, a reminder of the dangers of resisting progress and technological advancements. While their cause was born out of desperation and fear, their methods only brought destruction and sorrow. The tale of the young man who sought refuge at the inn serves as a grim reminder that even in the darkest of times, the truth has a way of surfacing, and justice will prevail.

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A Thirty Something Woman Ashworth Valley – Heywood Rochdale Road Haunting Manifestation A black animal either a dog or a large cat was seen running across this road followed by a woman in her thirties. The animal disappeared into a wall, and the woman vanished as a car braked hard to avoid hitting her.

In the small town of Ashworth Valley, nestled between Heywood and Rochdale, an eerie incident unfolded on a quiet evening. It was a time when the veil between the living and the spirit world seemed unusually thin.

As dusk settled upon the sleepy town, a lone car traversed the winding road that cut through the heart of the valley. The driver's attention was suddenly drawn to a swift movement ahead—a black figure darting across the road. At first glance, it appeared to be either a large cat or a dog, its shadowy form blending seamlessly with the fading light. Behind the mysterious creature, a woman in her thirties emerged, her eyes filled with determination as she gave chase. Her dark hair flowed behind her as she ran, matching the intensity of her pursuit. It was as if she and the creature were connected by an invisible bond, their fates intertwined.

Gasps escaped from the driver's lips as the animal reached the opposite side of the road and vanished into a solid brick wall. Disbelief filled the air as the impossible occurred before their eyes. The woman, however, did not slow her pace. Her steps carried her straight towards the same wall, undeterred by its solid presence.

As the car approached, the driver slammed on the brakes, their heart pounding in their chest. Time seemed to slow as the vehicle screeched to a halt, mere inches away from the mysterious woman. But to the driver's astonishment, she did not make contact with the car. Instead, she vanished into thin air, dissipating like a wisp of smoke.

Silence enveloped the road, broken only by the sound of the driver's heavy breathing. Confusion and a sense of foreboding lingered in the air. What had just transpired? Was it a trick of the light, a figment of the imagination?

Word of the incident spread like wildfire through the tight-knit community, capturing the imagination of the townsfolk. Some dismissed it as a collective hallucination, a result of fatigue or the mind playing tricks. But others couldn't shake the feeling that something more profound had occurred—a haunting manifestation of a tormented soul trapped between realms.

In the days that followed, the locals began sharing stories of encounters with the black animal and the woman. Each account carried the same eerie undertone—a sense of unresolved anguish and a desperate pursuit of something unknown.

As the community delved into its history, a tale from the past resurfaced, woven into the very fabric of Ashworth Valley. It was said that decades ago, a woman in her thirties had met a tragic end on that very road. The details were shrouded in mystery, but her spirit was rumored to roam the area, forever chasing after the spectral form of her beloved pet. Whether the sightings were a reflection of a restless spirit or a collective yearning for closure, the truth remained elusive. Some sought solace in the belief that the woman had finally found peace, her spirit reconciled with the ethereal presence that had eluded her for so long.

Over time, the stories of the black animal and the woman in her thirties became part of Ashworth Valley's folklore, a cautionary tale passed down through the generations. Travelers passing through would hear whispers of the haunting manifestation, prompting them to drive cautiously along that winding road, their eyes scanning for any glimpse of the spectral duo.

And so, Ashworth Valley carried on, with its secrets and mysteries, forever touched by the ethereal encounter that had unfolded on that fateful evening. The town remained a place where the boundaries between the living and the departed blurred, a reminder that

the supernatural could lurk just beyond the confines of perception.

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About Grandmas home made wine the Grand Children liked to sneak in and take a sip when the adult was not looking

Once upon a time, nestled in a small countryside village, there lived a charming grandma named Clara. She was known throughout the town for her warm smile, kind heart, and her exceptional talent for making homemade wine. Clara's vineyard flourished with luscious grapes, their clusters heavy with promise, ready to be transformed into her delightful elixir.

Clara's grandchildren, Emily and Jake, adored their visits to her cozy cottage. They spent countless hours exploring the vast garden, chasing butterflies, and playing hide-and-seek among the vineyard's trellises. But their secret excitement always lay in the hidden cellar, where Grandma Clara stored her precious wines.

The cellar held a mystique that fascinated the young siblings. Bottles of various shapes and sizes were meticulously arranged on wooden shelves, their labels weathered and aged like fine artifacts. Clara would lovingly tend to her collection, crafting the perfect concoctions year after year.

It didn't take long for Emily and Jake to notice the subtle change that came over the adults when they indulged in Grandma Clara's wine. Laughter filled the air, stories flowed freely, and worries seemed to melt away. Curiosity gnawed at the children, and they yearned to taste the magical elixir for themselves.

One sunny afternoon, when the adults gathered in the garden, sipping their glasses of wine and exchanging tales, Emily and Jake seized the opportunity to explore the cellar undisturbed. They tiptoed down the creaking wooden stairs, their eyes wide with anticipation.

Gazing upon the rows of shimmering bottles, they whispered to each other, plotting their plan. Jake, the older and braver of the two, carefully selected a bottle from the middle shelf. The label depicted a vibrant red grape, promising a flavor that set their taste buds tingling. With trembling hands, he popped the cork, allowing the aroma to fill the air.

The sweet scent of fermented grapes intoxicated their senses as Emily and Jake poured a tiny sip into their respective glasses. The liquid shimmered like a jewel, tempting them further. They clinked their glasses together, giggling mischievously before bringing them to their lips.

The first sip brought an explosion of flavors, as if their taste buds had unlocked a hidden treasure trove. They tasted notes of summer sunshine, laughter, and secrets shared. The forbidden wine danced on their tongues, leaving them longing for more.

As the siblings indulged in their secret adventure, unbeknownst to them, Grandma Clara stood at the cellar entrance, observing them with twinkling eyes. She had suspected their curious nature, their longing to experience the magic of her craft. And so, she decided to turn a blind eye, allowing them a taste of her prized creations.

Days turned into weeks, and weeks into months, as the tradition of the secret sips continued.

Emily and Jake developed a deeper appreciation for the craftsmanship and love that went into each bottle. They learned to recognize the distinct flavors, the nuances that made Clara's wine a masterpiece.

One day, as the children grew older and their secret adventures became a distant memory, they mustered the courage to confess their clandestine escapades to Grandma Clara. They found her tending to the grapevines, her hands wrinkled with age but still agile.

With a gentle smile, she listened to their tale, nodding knowingly. She shared how, as children, she too had snuck sips of her own grandfather's wine, passing down a tradition that bridged generations. Her understanding washed away their guilt, replacing it with a bond strengthened by shared experiences.

From that day forward, Emily and Jake no longer needed to sneak sips of Grandma Clara's wine. They were invited to partake in the magic openly, embracing their place within the legacy of her craft. Together, they celebrated the beauty of family, tradition, and the simple pleasures that bind generations together.

And so, in that quaint countryside village, the aroma of Clara's homemade wine continued to enchant all who tasted it. The vineyard flourished, and the legacy of secret sips lived on, a cherished memory passed down through the ages.

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Accrington cemetery,

In the peaceful town of Accrington, nestled amidst rolling hills and quaint houses, there was a cemetery that held stories of lives long past. It was a place where people came to pay their respects, to remember their loved ones, and to find solace in the tranquility of the surroundings. However, one particular story stood out among the countless tales of remembrance—a haunting manifestation that left witnesses in awe and disbelief.

The year was circa 2012 when two visitors found themselves in the cemetery, unaware of the extraordinary encounter that awaited them. The autumn leaves painted a picturesque scene, gently cascading down as a cool breeze whispered through the aged tombstones. The sky wore hues of orange and gold, casting a warm glow over the solemn grounds.

As the visitors strolled along the winding paths, their footsteps muffled by fallen leaves, they noticed a girl standing near a gravestone. Her brown hair cascaded down her shoulders, and her piercing blue eyes held an ethereal gaze. The two witnesses, captivated by her presence, approached cautiously, unsure if she was real or merely a figment of their imagination.

The girl seemed lost in her own thoughts, her eyes fixed upon the grave. The visitors hesitated, sensing an aura of sadness that surrounded her. They exchanged glances, silently acknowledging the inexplicable nature of the situation. With trepidation, they decided to gently speak to her, hoping to offer comfort or assistance.

"Excuse us, are you alright?" one of them ventured, her voice filled with concern.

The girl turned slowly, her gaze meeting theirs. Her expression held a melancholic beauty, as if carrying the weight of a thousand sorrows. For a moment, silence lingered in the air, as though time had frozen around them.

Then, without warning, the brown-haired girl began to fade. Her form dissipated like mist, leaving the witnesses bewildered and awestruck. They rubbed their eyes in disbelief, questioning the reality of what they had just witnessed.

A mixture of emotions surged within the witnesses—amazement, curiosity, and a touch of fear. They exchanged hushed whispers, attempting to make sense of the encounter. Had they truly witnessed a ghostly apparition? Or was it a mere trick of light and shadows?

As days turned into weeks and weeks into months, the memory of the brown-haired girl remained etched in their minds. They returned to the cemetery, hoping to catch another glimpse of her ethereal presence. Yet, try as they might, the haunting manifestation never reappeared.

The story of the brown-haired girl became a whispered legend, passed down among the townsfolk of Accrington. Some dismissed it as a figment of imagination, while others embraced the possibility of an otherworldly encounter. Regardless, the tale sparked conversations, igniting a sense of wonder and curiosity in those who heard it.

Over time, the cemetery's popularity grew, drawing visitors from near and far. People came not only to pay their respects but also to seek out the enigmatic presence of the brown-haired girl. She became a symbol of mystery and a gentle reminder of the thin veil that separates the living from the departed.

Years passed, and the memory of the brown-haired girl gradually faded into the tapestry of Accrington's history. Yet, her story remained alive in the hearts of those who believed, leaving an indelible mark on the cemetery's legacy.

And so, in the quietude of the Accrington cemetery, the brown-haired girl found her place, forever engraved in the town's collective memory—a symbol of the unexplainable, the transient, and the eternal mysteries that lie beyond our understanding.

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In the small town of Accrington, nestled on Black Abbey Road, a haunting manifestation occurred. It was a tale whispered by locals, a story that sent chills down their spines. The legend spoke of a ghostly figure, known as the Screaming Girl, who wandered the streets with an air of sadness and anguish.

The exact date and time of her existence remained shrouded in mystery. Some believed she had been present for centuries, while others claimed her presence was a more recent occurrence. Nevertheless, her spectral form was undeniably haunting.

The Screaming Girl was said to drift quietly along the road, her ethereal presence barely perceptible to those who passed by. But it was when someone dared to approach her that the true horror revealed itself. As if triggered by an unseen force, she would let out a blood-curdling scream, a piercing sound that chilled the hearts of all who heard it.

Legends whispered that the Screaming Girl's tormented existence was born out of tragedy and forbidden love. According to the tales, she had once been a mortal woman who found herself entangled in a forbidden affair with one of the monks residing at the nearby abbey. Their love, concealed within the sacred walls, was a dangerous secret that eventually led to their undoing.

It was rumored that the authorities discovered their illicit relationship, leading to dire consequences for the couple. The townsfolk, fueled by their righteous anger, set fire to the hidden lover's hiding place, resulting in a horrific blaze that consumed them both.

The screams of agony echoed through the night, forever etching their pain into the fabric of Black Abbey Road.

In death, the Screaming Girl became a restless spirit, forever trapped in the memories of her tragic demise. Her apparition, draped in ethereal white, wandered the road seeking solace, longing to find peace in a world that had cruelly taken it from her.

Visitors to Black Abbey Road would sometimes catch glimpses of her sorrowful figure, a translucent specter caught between the realms of the living and the dead. Some claimed they could see tears streaming down her ghostly face as she silently lamented her fate.

The townsfolk, though terrified by her presence, couldn't help but feel a deep sense of sympathy for the Screaming Girl. They left offerings at the site where her love affair had met its fiery end, hoping to appease her restless soul and find forgiveness for the sins committed against her.

As the years passed, the legend of the Screaming Girl persisted, captivating the imagination of locals and drawing the curiosity of brave souls seeking to witness the paranormal. Some sought to communicate with her, hoping to bring closure to her tortured existence, while others merely sought the thrill of encountering a ghostly apparition.

To this day, the Screaming Girl continues her ghostly journey along Black Abbey Road, her spectral presence a constant reminder of the tragic consequences that forbidden love can bring. She serves as a warning to those who dare to let their hearts guide them down treacherous paths, forever haunting the road and screaming her eternal sorrow into the night.

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In the small town of Accrington, nestled amidst the rolling hills of Lancashire, an unusual phenomenon unfolded on a chilly autumn evening in November 1984. The residents of East Crescent, a quiet neighborhood known for its close-knit community, found themselves witnesses to a truly extraordinary event: a rain of apples.

It was a Friday evening like any other. Families gathered around their dinner tables, children played in the streets, and the scent of homemade pies wafted through the air. But as the sun began to set and darkness settled over Accrington, something unexpected occurred.

As the clock struck seven, a low rumbling sound echoed through the town, catching the attention of the locals. They ventured outside, peering curiously into the night sky. What they saw left them awe-struck. Apples, small and red, were falling from above, gently descending like raindrops in a peculiar shower of fruit.

At first, it seemed like a whimsical occurrence, a playful trick of nature. But as the apples continued to fall, the residents' bewilderment turned into astonishment. The shower of apples intensified, transforming the tranquil streets into a scene of wonder and confusion.

People hurried to gather their families and protect their homes, seeking shelter from this extraordinary apple rain. Umbrellas were turned upside down, capturing as many apples as they could, while children ran outside with baskets, laughing and collecting the fallen fruit as if they were precious treasures.

News of the apple rain quickly spread throughout Accrington. The local radio stations buzzed with excitement, and the incident became the talk of the town. The story reached far beyond the borders of the small Lancashire community, capturing the attention of news outlets across the country.

Experts and meteorologists were called upon to explain this unusual phenomenon. The prevailing theory suggested that a powerful gust of wind had swept through an apple orchard nearby, dislodging the ripe fruit from the trees and carrying them through the air, creating the illusion of a magical apple rain.

For nearly an hour, the apple rain persisted, showering the houses of East Crescent with a cornucopia of nature's bounty. As the last apple fell to the ground, the townspeople emerged from their homes, a mixture of amusement and wonder on their faces. The once-bare streets were now carpeted with apples, transforming the neighborhood into a mosaic of crimson and green.

In the aftermath of this remarkable event, the community of East Crescent came together.

Neighbors gathered to help one another, picking up apples and sharing in the joyous abundance that had unexpectedly graced their lives. Families baked apple pies, shared apple cider, and laughed as they recounted tales of the great apple rain.

Years passed, and the apple rain of Accrington became a cherished memory, a story passed down through generations. It became a symbol of unity, resilience, and the extraordinary beauty that can emerge from the most unexpected circumstances.

To this day, visitors to Accrington can find traces of the apple rain if they look closely. The spirit of community and the appreciation for life's unpredictable wonders still resonate within the hearts of the town's residents. And on quiet autumn nights, when the wind rustles through the trees, some claim they can hear the faint echo of apples falling from the sky—a reminder of a magical night when the heavens bestowed a shower of blessings upon a small town called Accrington.

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Alice Nutter did not in fact ever live at Roughlee Old Hall

Alice Nutter did not in fact ever live at Roughlee Old Hall (as legend has had it for some 411 years) 2023.

Alice Nutter did not in fact ever live at Roughlee Old Hall (as legend has had it for some 150 years), her home was on the Crowtrees estate some half a mile to the west. Nor did she have the riches and estates that Potts would have us believe, she was wealthier than her companions in the Well Tower dungeon at Lancaster but any real wealth would have stayed with her Whitaker family outside of the forest. It is an integral part of the Alice Nutter legend that her family refused to speak up for her and actively allowed her to be prosecuted in order to gain her estates. Nutter (Alice O'Dick O'Miles) In 1561 John Hargreaves of Roughlee, William Smith of Roughlee and Nicholas Robinson of Roughlee, at the request of Miles Nutter, his wife Elizabeth and his son Richard surrendered half of a farm property in Roughlee (on rental of £0: 22s: 2d per annum) to the use of John Smith (son of William Smith of Roughlee), John Smith (son of William Smith of Pighole in Briercliffe), James and John Whittaker (sons of Giles Whittaker of Huncote, the brothers of Alice Nutter). The right of John Nutter (son of Miles) was reserved. The intent of the surrender was that the share in the farm was to go to the use of Miles Nutter and Elizabeth his wife and after their deaths a quarter share was to go to 'Alice Nutter, now wife of the said Richard Nutter for life, in the name of her dower.' The remainder of the property was to go to Richard and his heirs. This was possibly the farm on which John Smith built Roughlee Old Hall. Who, then, was Alice, wife of Dick O' Miles? The Whitaker family had been in the Padiham area since the thirteenth century and eventually split into three main branches; the Whitakers of Holme-in-Cliviger, the Whitakers of Broadclough and the family of Simonstone. Attached to this latter branch was Gyles Whitaker of Huncoat, he had been constable of Huncoat four times, greave of Huncoat in 1556 and was of sufficient importance to have been only one of two men to have appeared on the Muster Roll. Alice was one of Gyles Whitaker's five children, the others being the eldest, James, John, Agnes and Joan. There is no surprise in the fact that the Roughlee Nutters and the Huncoat Whitakers became related; although some five miles in distance the Simonstone Whitakers were continually trading lands within Pendle Forest. The most interesting personage connected with Roughlee is Alice Nutter, one of those accused of witchcraft, and hanged at Lancaster in 1612. She was the wife of Richard son of Miles Nutter, and had a son Miles and other children; her paternal name does not appear to be known. She stood out from the others accused as being 'a rich woman, [who] had a great estate and children of good hope: in the common opinion of the world, of good temper, free from envy or malice.' The charges against her were that she was present at the witches' meeting at Malkin Tower, and that with old Elizabeth Device she had conspired to kill Henry Mitton of Roughlee because he had refused to give Device a penny. She resolutely denied her guilt; as the recorder says, 'she died very impenitent, insomuch as her own children were never able to move her to confess any particular offence or declare anything, even in articulo mortis.'

Story.

Alice Nutter, a woman whose name would forever be entwined with the dark tale of witchcraft and persecution, had never lived at Roughlee Old Hall, despite the legends that had persisted for over four centuries. In the year 2023, this truth was finally brought to light.

Contrary to popular belief, Alice Nutter's true residence was on the Crowtrees estate, located half a mile to the west of Roughlee Old Hall. Additionally, the riches and estates that had been

attributed to her were mere fabrications. While she may have possessed more wealth than her companions in the Well Tower dungeon at Lancaster, any true fortune belonged to her Whitaker family, residing outside the forest.

A crucial aspect of the Alice Nutter legend was the belief that her own family had abandoned her during her trial and allowed her to be prosecuted in order to seize her estates. However, the reality was quite different. Alice's family, the Whitakers, had chosen not to intervene and speak up for her, but it was not for the reasons people assumed. They did so out of respect for her wishes and because the wealth tied to her name was not rightfully theirs.

Digging further into Alice Nutter's origins, it becomes evident that her maiden name was Alice O'Dick O'Miles. In 1561, a property exchange took place in Roughlee, orchestrated by Miles Nutter, Alice's father. He, along with his wife Elizabeth and his son Richard, surrendered half of a farm property to the use of various individuals, including Alice herself and her brothers James and John Whittaker. The property was intended for Alice and her husband Richard Nutter during their lifetimes, and afterwards, a quarter share was to be allocated to Alice as her dower. The remainder was to go to Richard and his heirs. This farm was possibly the very land on which Roughlee Old Hall was constructed by John Smith.

The question arises: Who exactly was Alice, the wife of Dick O'Miles? Alice hailed from the Whitaker family, which had a long-standing presence in the Padiham region since the thirteenth century. The Whitakers had split into three primary branches: the Whitakers of Holme-in-Cliviger, the Whitakers of Broadclough, and the family of Simonstone. Alice belonged to the Simonstone branch, specifically as one of the five children of Gyles Whitaker of Huncoat. Gyles was a notable figure in his own right, having served as constable of Huncoat multiple times and appearing on the Muster Roll, a testament to his significance. Apart from Alice, Gyles had four other children: James, John, Agnes, and Joan.

It comes as no surprise that the Roughlee Nutters and the Huncoat Whitakers became linked through marriage. Despite being approximately five miles apart, the Simonstone Whitakers frequently traded lands within Pendle Forest, forging connections between the families.

However, the most intriguing and tragic figure associated with Roughlee was none other than Alice Nutter herself. In the year 1612, she was accused of witchcraft and subsequently met her untimely end at Lancaster, where she was hanged. Alice was the wife of Richard, the son of Miles Nutter, and together they had a son named Miles, among other children. Regrettably, her paternal name remains unknown.

Alice stood apart from the other accused individuals, as she was described as a "rich woman" with significant wealth, children of promise, and a reputation for good temperament, devoid of envy or malice, as viewed by the common world. The charges brought against her included her alleged presence at the witches' gathering at Malkin Tower and a conspiracy with old Elizabeth Device to murder Henry Mitton of Roughlee due to his refusal to provide a penny to Device. Throughout her trial, Alice staunchly denied her guilt, refusing to confess any wrongdoing or disclose any information, even on the brink of death.

In the end, Alice Nutter met her fate with impenitence, leaving her own children unable to extract any admissions or revelations from her, not even in articulo mortis. Her story, intertwined with the tragic history of the Pendle Witch Trials, would forever leave an indelible mark on the annals of folklore and dark history, captivating the imaginations of generations to come.

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It comes as no surprise that the Roughlee Nutters and the Huncoat Whitakers became linked through marriage. Despite being approximately five miles apart, the Simonstone Whitakers frequently traded lands within Pendle Forest, forging connections between the families.

However, the most intriguing and tragic figure associated with Roughlee was none other than Alice Nutter herself. In the year 1612, she was accused of witchcraft and subsequently met her untimely end at Lancaster, where she was hanged. Alice was the wife of Richard, the son of Miles Nutter, and together they had a son named Miles, among other children. Regrettably, her paternal name remains unknown.

Alice stood apart from the other accused individuals, as she was described as a "rich woman" with significant wealth, children of promise, and a reputation for good temperament, devoid of envy or malice, as viewed by the common world. The charges brought against her included her alleged presence at the witches' gathering at Malkin Tower and a conspiracy with old Elizabeth Device to murder Henry Mitton of Roughlee due to his refusal to provide a penny to Device. Throughout her trial, Alice staunchly denied her guilt, refusing to confess any wrongdoing or disclose any information, even on the brink of death.

In the end, Alice Nutter met her fate with impenitence, leaving her own children unable to extract any admissions or revelations from her, not even in articulo mortis. Her story,

intertwined with the tragic history of the Pendle Witch Trials, would forever leave an indelible mark on the annals of folklore and dark history, captivating the imaginations of generations to come.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

An Old Quaker Burial Ground

In the quiet glen, nestled among the oak, sycamore, and orchard trees, stood the Old Quaker Burial Ground. Its quaint old house, with its rugged corners and chimney, exuded a rustic charm that blended seamlessly with the natural beauty of the surroundings. The simplicity and unadorned nature of the building made it a perfect meeting place for the meek in spirit. Isolated from the hustle and bustle of the outside world, this serene spot was where the followers of George Fox gathered to worship. With unwavering faith and in accordance with their own consciences, they sought to connect with God in spirit and truth. The Quaker burial ground, known as "God's acre," lay opposite the old house, demarcated by a low wall on the north and east, while a deep ditch and magnificent trees formed natural boundaries on the west and south. Several gravestones, lacking inscriptions, dotted the sacred ground, silently marking the resting places of those who had passed on.

Among the gravestones, one stood near the wall, bearing a poignant inscription: "Here lyeth the body of Elizabeth, the wife of John Vipont, 1681." The name Vipont was unfamiliar to the locals, although it was said that a few Viponts still resided in the nearby vicinity of Colne. Elizabeth's presence here reminded visitors of the long history that had unfolded within these peaceful grounds.

The view from the Quaker burial ground was nothing short of breathtaking. Catlow Water, a picturesque stream, meandered gracefully through the wooded valley, eventually merging with Pendle Water. The "Forest," adorned with charming farmsteads, painted a quintessentially English scene, backed by the imposing figure of Pendle Hill. It was a sight that truly captured the essence of tranquility and beauty.

As visitors contemplated the scene, they couldn't help but feel the weight of the words engraved in their minds. "The poor man's grave; this is the spot where rests his weary clay," they whispered. Here, in this humble place, those who had known hardship and toil found solace in eternal slumber. Yet, unlike grand gravestones that adorned other cemeteries, no towering memorials or intricate sculptures adorned these graves. The absence of ostentation was a testament to the Quaker belief in simplicity and equality. No weeping willows swayed overhead, and no faint memorial, no matter how faint, sought to distinguish the poor man's grave.

The Old Quaker Burial Ground stood as a testament to a community that valued inner spirituality over outward showmanship. It was a place where the meek and humble found solace, where the beauty of nature and the peace of a simple life intertwined harmoniously. In this lovely resting place, the spirits of the silent dead seemed to whisper their stories, reminding all who visited of the power and enduring beauty of a life lived with integrity and grace.

The poor man's grave; this is the spot
Where rests his weary clay;
And yet no gravestones lifts its head
To say what gravestones say.
No sculptured emb ems blazon here,
No weeping willows wave,
No faint memorial, e'er so faint,
Points out the poor man's grave.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Anne Mort

The small village of Astley was known for its picturesque canals that wound their way through the tranquil countryside. The locals would often take leisurely strolls along the water's edge, enjoying the serenity that the canals provided. However, there was one specter that haunted the area, a ghostly figure known as Anne Mort.

Legend had it that Anne Mort was a young woman who had lived in Astley many years ago. She was said to be a beauty with flowing chestnut hair and sparkling blue eyes. Anne had captured the hearts of many suitors in the village, but she only had eyes for one man, Thomas Kingsley. Thomas was a dashing young gentleman who had recently returned from a long journey overseas. Anne and Thomas had fallen deeply in love, their hearts entwined like the ivy that adorned the old village church. They spent their days walking hand in hand along the canals, dreaming of a future together.

However, their love story took a tragic turn when Thomas received news that he was to inherit a vast fortune from a distant relative. Tempted by the promise of wealth and adventure, Thomas made the decision to leave Astley behind and seek his fortune elsewhere. He promised Anne that he would return for her one day, but his departure left her heartbroken.

Days turned into weeks, weeks turned into months, and still, there was no sign of Thomas.

Anne's heart grew heavy with grief, and as the seasons changed, her health began to decline. She would often be seen wandering along the canals, her ethereal figure draped in a flowing grey gown, her face pale and haunting.

The villagers believed that Anne had died of a broken heart, her love for Thomas consuming her until there was nothing left. It was said that her spirit could not rest, forever condemned to roam the canals in search of her lost love.

Locals and visitors alike spoke of encountering the ghostly figure of Anne Mort. Some claimed to have seen her walking silently by the canal waters, her sad eyes fixed on the horizon. Others reported hearing whispers carried by the wind, a mournful melody that spoke of unrequited love. The haunting manifestation of Anne Mort became part of Astley's folklore, a cautionary tale of the power of love and the consequences of forsaking it. The villagers would gather by the canals on moonlit nights, sharing stories of their encounters with the grey lady. They offered prayers and flowers, hoping to bring peace to her tormented soul.

Generations passed, and the legend of Anne Mort continued to captivate the villagers of Astley. Each year, on the anniversary of her death, the canal banks would be adorned with bouquets of blue forget-me-nots, a symbol of undying love. The villagers believed that the gesture would help ease Anne's sorrow and allow her to find solace in the afterlife.

And so, Anne Mort's presence lingered in the hearts and minds of the people of Astley, a poignant reminder that love, once forsaken, could never truly be forgotten. Her ghostly figure would forever roam the canals, a symbol of love lost and a testament to the power of a broken heart.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Woman's Skull

In the quaint village of Appley Bridge, nestled amidst the rolling hills and lush greenery, stood a peculiar house known as Skull House. It derived its name from a mysterious artifact that resided within its walls - a woman's skull. The legend surrounding this skull had captivated the locals for generations, as the skull possessed an inexplicable power, forever bound to the house.

The story began many years ago when a wandering traveler stumbled upon the remote village. He was a scholar, driven by a thirst for knowledge and the desire to uncover the secrets of the world. The traveler's name was Alexander, a man known for his unwavering determination and relentless pursuit of truth.

Alexander's arrival in Appley Bridge coincided with a terrible storm that lashed the village, its fury seeming to mirror the curiosity burning within him. Seeking refuge, he stumbled upon Skull House, an imposing structure standing defiantly against the elements. The weary traveler was welcomed by the house's owner, an elderly woman named Agatha.

Agatha was a wise and enigmatic figure, her eyes filled with ancient knowledge and secrets untold. She recognized Alexander's insatiable hunger for answers and chose to share with him the tale of the woman's skull that had come to rest within her dwelling. Legend had it that the skull belonged to a young woman named Eliza, who had lived in the village centuries ago. Eliza was known for her beauty and intelligence, captivating the hearts and minds of all who crossed her path. However, her fate took a dark turn when she fell victim to a heinous crime, her life tragically cut short.

It was said that Eliza's restless spirit found solace within her skull, which somehow found its way to Skull House. Agatha revealed that the skull possessed an extraordinary ability - it could not be removed from the building. Countless attempts had been made by those who sought to possess its power, but it always teleported back to its rightful place within the house.

Eager to unravel the mysteries surrounding the skull, Alexander delved into the depths of the house's history. He spent countless hours pouring over ancient texts, speaking with villagers, and delving into the ethereal realm of the supernatural.

As the days turned into weeks, and the weeks into months, Alexander's obsession with the skull grew. He became consumed by the desire to free Eliza's spirit, believing that her restless soul was tethered to the artifact within Skull House.

One fateful night, after hours of tireless research, Alexander stumbled upon an ancient incantation hidden within a weathered tome. The incantation promised to release the spirit of Eliza from its earthly confinement, but it required a tremendous sacrifice.

Undeterred, Alexander gathered the necessary materials and prepared himself for the ritual. The villagers, who had grown fond of the traveler during his stay, watched with a mixture of curiosity and apprehension.

As the moon reached its zenith, casting an eerie glow upon the village, Alexander stood before the skull, its hollow eye sockets seeming to stare back at him. With a voice filled with conviction, he chanted the incantation, his words resonating through the ancient halls of Skull House.

A surge of energy coursed through the room, and for a fleeting moment, it seemed as if the skull would finally be freed from its eternal prison. But as quickly as the surge came, it vanished, leaving Alexander bewildered and the skull still resting upon its pedestal.

The legend had proven true once more - the skull could not be removed from the building. Eliza's spirit remained trapped within its cold embrace, forever bound to Skull House.

Alexander, though disheartened by his failure, found solace in knowing that he had tried

to bring peace to a tormented soul. He bid

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Sacred Hearts Church, Colne, Lancashire,

Uncle Fred and Aunt Nelly had always been an adventurous couple, but their current situation brought them face to face with a new challenge. As they settled into their rented cottage near Sacred Hearts Church in Colne, Lancashire, they couldn't help but notice the mischievous hobgoblins lurking about.

The hobgoblins were notorious troublemakers in the area, causing mischief and playing pranks on unsuspecting villagers. Their presence made life difficult for Uncle Fred and Aunt Nelly, who were already grappling with the uncertainty of war. However, the couple was not one to back down easily.

Uncle Fred, with his disability preventing him from joining the army, felt a strong sense of duty to serve his country in any way he could. When he learned that the farmer who owned the cottage, Mr. Jenkins, was in dire need of help on his farm due to the absence of his sons and workers, Uncle Fred saw an opportunity.

He approached Mr. Jenkins with a proposition. "Sir, I may not be fit for the army, but I can certainly lend a hand on your farm. Let me work the land and tend to your animals while your sons are away. In return, would you kindly ask the hobgoblins to leave us in peace?"

Mr. Jenkins was skeptical at first, as he had heard stories about the hobgoblins' mischievous nature and was unsure if Uncle Fred would be able to handle them. However, seeing the determination in Uncle Fred's eyes, he agreed to the deal.

So it began. Uncle Fred rose early every morning and worked tirelessly on the farm. He plowed the fields, planted crops, and tended to the livestock. Aunt Nelly, with her green thumb, helped in the garden and made sure the cottage was a warm and welcoming home.

As the days passed, the hobgoblins noticed Uncle Fred's hard work and dedication. They were intrigued by his commitment and decided to test him. They would hide tools, scatter seeds, and play pranks on the farm. But Uncle Fred remained undeterred.

Instead of getting angry, he smiled and laughed along with the hobgoblins. He even left them little treats as a peace offering. Gradually, the mischievous creatures began to see Uncle Fred as a friend rather than a foe. They started to help him on the farm, making tasks easier and faster. Word spread throughout the village about Uncle Fred's unique relationship with the hobgoblins. People were amazed at how he had managed to turn them into allies. The church community, which had been dealing with their own troubles during the war, saw this as a sign of hope.

The Reverend of Sacred Hearts Church, Reverend Anderson, approached Uncle Fred and asked him to share his story with the congregation. "Your tale of unity and friendship with the hobgoblins is truly remarkable," he said. "It is a testament to the power of understanding and compassion, even in the most difficult times."

Uncle Fred agreed, and on a Sunday morning, he stood before the churchgoers and shared his journey. His words resonated deeply with the community, reminding them that unity and kindness could overcome any challenge.

As the war raged on, Uncle Fred's farm became a symbol of resilience and harmony. People from near and far came to witness the incredible sight of hobgoblins willingly working alongside humans.

When the war finally came to an end, the village celebrated with a grand feast at Sacred Hearts Church. The hobgoblins, once notorious for their mischief, were now welcomed as honored guests. They danced and laughed with the villagers, their mischievous nature now a source of amusement rather than trouble.

Uncle Fred and Aunt Nelly continued to work on the farm, but their days were filled with joy and gratitude. They had not only served their country through their labor but had also brought together a community and forged unlikely friendships.

The legacy of Uncle Fred and Aunt Nelly's time in Colne lived on for generations. The story of the hobgoblins and their transformative power became a cherished tale, reminding everyone of the strength that lies in unity and understanding, even in the face of adversity. And at Sacred Hearts Church, the bells rang out in celebration, echoing the resounding message of hope and love.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

In the small village of Barrowford, nestled among rolling hills and meandering streams, there lived an eccentric old man named Robert Bannister. Known to all as the village dentist, he was the only person brave enough to take on the task of extracting teeth in those days. His humble abode stood beside the local inn, whimsically named the "Gaumless."

One day, a young boy named Joseph Dyson found himself in desperate need of dental assistance.

A throbbing toothache had plagued him for days, and the time had come to face the dreaded dentist. With trepidation in his heart, Joseph ventured into Bannister's modest dental office.

The interior was dimly lit, and the air was heavy with the scent of medicinal herbs. As Joseph approached the dentist's chair, he noticed Bannister's peculiar request. "Sit on the floor," the old man said with a crooked grin. Perplexed but obedient, Joseph obliged, positioning himself on the worn-out wooden floor.

Bannister, a man of unconventional methods, positioned himself beside the boy, tucking his head between his legs. From a pocket within his faded vest, he pulled out a fearsome-looking instrument wrapped in a worn, red handkerchief. It appeared more like a relic from a medieval torture chamber than a dental tool.

With determination etched on his weathered face, Bannister proceeded to work. The struggle was strenuous and painful as he battled against the resistant tooth. Joseph winced and gritted his teeth, gripping the edges of his trousers tightly. Finally, with one last exertion, the tooth was freed from its stubborn hold.

The boy let out a sigh of relief mingled with a whimper of pain. Bannister, observing the discomfort etched across Joseph's face, couldn't help but feel a tinge of guilt. "I think I have hurt thee, lad," he confessed, his voice filled with concern. "Tha' can have th' twopence back."

Despite his unorthodox methods and gruff demeanor, Robert Bannister possessed a kind heart. He cared for the well-being of his patients, even if his methods were unconventional. The act of returning the twopence fee was a testament to his genuine concern for Joseph's well-being. Word of Bannister's unique dental practice spread throughout Barrowford, captivating the villagers with both awe and curiosity. Patients would recount tales of sitting on the floor or standing awkwardly, depending on the position of the troublesome tooth. In particularly stubborn cases, heads between legs became the norm.

As the years passed, Barrowford underwent numerous changes. Modern dentistry arrived, rendering Bannister's archaic methods obsolete. The old dentist reluctantly retired, passing the torch to a younger, more scientifically inclined generation.

Though the memories of Bannister's unconventional dental practice faded, the village never forgot the eccentric old man who extracted teeth with determination and care. And if you were to stroll through the streets of Barrowford today, you might hear a few elderly villagers reminiscing about the days when dental appointments involved sitting on the floor or getting their heads between Bannister's legs, wrapped in a red handkerchief.

For it was in those moments, in that small village, that Robert Bannister left his mark as a dedicated dentist, whose unorthodox methods and genuine concern became part of the folklore of Barrowford—a testament to the resilience and ingenuity of a bygone era.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Muttering Yokel

Barton on Irwell - Olde Rock House

In the quiet village of Barton on Irwell, nestled amidst the rolling countryside, there stood an ancient establishment known as the Olde Rock House. This old inn had witnessed the ebb and flow of history, its walls whispering tales of times long past. However, there was one particular story that sent shivers down the spines of those who dared to listen—the legend of the Muttering Yokel.

It was said that during the tumultuous days of the English Civil War, a loyal royalist found himself on the run from Cromwellian soldiers. Desperate to evade capture, he devised a cunning plan. Disguising himself as a simple farmer, he set off on foot through the countryside surrounding Barton on Irwell.

Muttering to himself under his breath, the disguised royalist repeated the phrase, "Now thus, now thus," as if it held some hidden power to ward off danger. With each step, his heart pounded in his chest, aware that discovery could mean imprisonment or worse.

As fate would have it, the Cromwellian pursuers were close behind, their boots thudding on the dirt path. But the quick-thinking royalist managed to stay one step ahead, his disguise fooling the vigilant roundheads. He traversed fields, meandering lanes, and hidden footpaths, always muttering his protective mantra.

Finally, as the sun began to set, the loyalist reached the outskirts of Barton on Irwell. The roundheads, convinced they had lost their quarry, abandoned their search and returned to their camp. The disguised royalist let out a sigh of relief, his ruse having saved his life.

Though the years rolled on and the Civil War became a distant memory, the spirit of the Muttering Yokel lingered. Residents and visitors alike would occasionally catch glimpses of a figure dressed in tattered clothing, wandering the village and muttering to himself.

Some claimed to have seen the specter during twilight hours, as if the ghostly farmer was reenacting his daring escape. Others reported hearing faint whispers carried on the wind, the haunting echo of "Now thus, now thus." The Olde Rock House became the focal point of these paranormal encounters, as if the spirit was drawn to the place where his desperate flight had begun.

Local folklore grew around the legend, and the Muttering Yokel became both a cautionary tale and a source of fascination. Visitors would gather in hushed anticipation, hoping to catch a glimpse of the ghostly figure. Some claimed that witnessing the apparition brought good luck, while others warned of the chill that permeated the air whenever the spirit drew near.

Generations passed, and the legend of the Muttering Yokel continued to captivate the imagination of those who called Barton on Irwell home. The Olde Rock House, now a historic landmark, attracted tourists from far and wide, all eager to experience the spectral presence that haunted its halls.

And so, the Muttering Yokel remained an enigma—a ghostly reminder of a time when loyalty and survival were intertwined. Whether a restless spirit or a figment of imagination, the legend lived on, its ethereal whispers echoing through the ages, forever etched into the fabric of Barton on Irwell's history.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Birkenhead - Former Cammell Laird site, Merseyside Haunting Manifestation

In the heart of Birkenhead, on the former Cammell Laird site, stood a place shrouded in mystery and spectral tales. This once-thriving industrial hub now lay abandoned, its echoing halls and rusting machinery serving as a haunting reminder of its former glory. But it was not just the decaying remnants of the past that captured the attention of those brave enough to venture into its eerie depths; it was the ethereal presence of a little old lady that sent chills down their spines. Within the dilapidated corridors, workers would often find themselves at the mercy of inexplicable occurrences. Lights flickered relentlessly, turning on and off without any rational explanation. Doors swung open and closed with a creaking eeriness that resonated through the silence. It was as if the building itself had a life of its own, playing tricks on anyone who dared to enter.

But the most chilling encounters came in the form of a specter—an apparition that took the shape of a strange old lady. She would appear unexpectedly, wandering through the deserted site with an air of melancholy about her. Her figure was frail and hunched, draped in tattered garments that whispered of bygone eras.

The staff, while startled by her presence, quickly grew accustomed to her spectral wanderings. They would catch glimpses of her out of the corner of their eyes, only for her to vanish into thin air when they turned their heads. Her visits were often fleeting, leaving behind an uncanny sense of foreboding in her wake.

Rumors spread among the workers, each person sharing their own encounters with the mysterious lady. Some would speak of seeing men in boiler suits passing by the windows, their presence fleeting before dissolving into nothingness. Others whispered about the soft sound of a lullaby drifting through the corridors, carrying with it a sense of longing and loss.

Despite the supernatural occurrences, the old lady was not feared by those who witnessed her ethereal presence. In fact, some felt a deep empathy toward her, sensing her unfulfilled desires and unresolved sorrow. They wondered if she was a lost soul, forever bound to the site of her past.

As time went on, the legend of the little old lady grew, drawing the attention of paranormal investigators and enthusiasts from far and wide. They flocked to the former Cammell Laird site, armed with their equipment and a burning curiosity to uncover the truth behind the haunting manifestation.

Together, they delved into the history of the place, unearthing stories of workers who had toiled tirelessly within its walls, creating magnificent ships that sailed across the seas. They discovered tales of personal tragedies and lives cut short, intertwining with the machinery and steel that had shaped this industrial marvel.

Through their research, a name emerged—Evelyn Blackwood. She had been a seamstress, crafting intricate sails for the mighty vessels that once called this place home. Her passion for her work was unmatched, her dedication unwavering. Yet, her dreams of sailing away on the ships she had helped create were shattered when tragedy struck, leaving her life forever tied to the site.

With this newfound knowledge, the investigators sought to communicate with Evelyn, to offer her solace and a chance to find peace. They held séances and conducted experiments, attempting to bridge the gap between the living and the spirit world.

Their efforts bore fruit when, during one particularly intense session, the investigators felt a presence engulfing the room. The temperature dropped, and whispers filled the air. And then, there she was—Evelyn Blackwood, the little old lady who had haunted the Cammell Laird site

for so long.

Evelyn's ethereal form appeared before them, her eyes brimming with a mixture of sadness and gratitude. Through a medium, she conveyed her story—the dreams that were never realized, the longing for the sea, and the overwhelming grief that had kept her bound to the site.

With compassion and understanding, the investigators offered her a chance to finally find peace. They spoke words of comfort and closure, encouraging her to let go of the pain that had kept her tethered to this world. And as the séance drew to a close, Evelyn's spectral figure began to fade, her energy dispersing into the ether.

From that day forward, the former Cammell Laird site stood as a testament to the tales of the little old lady. The haunting manifestations ceased, replaced by a sense of tranquility that enveloped the once-abandoned halls. Workers, still aware of the history that had unfolded within those walls, carried on with their tasks, their footsteps echoing through the corridors in harmony with the whispers of the past.

And while the legend of Evelyn Blackwood, the little old lady of Birkenhead, lived on, it was no longer accompanied by fear or unease. Instead, it became a reminder of the power of empathy and understanding, and the capacity of the human spirit to find solace, even in the face of otherworldly mysteries.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Blacko Tower, Blacko, Lancashire,

There, on the side of Blacko Tower, was a mischievous creature unlike anything they had ever encountered before. It was a hobgoblin, standing about three feet tall, with wild, tangled hair and pointy ears that twitched with excitement. Its eyes sparkled with mischief as it observed the astonished onlookers.

The hobgoblin's presence seemed to awaken a sense of curiosity and wonder in the hearts of the people gathered at the tower. They cautiously approached the peculiar creature, their eyes filled with both trepidation and fascination. The hobgoblin, sensing their mixed emotions, let out a mischievous chuckle.

"What brings you to our humble abode, little hobgoblin?" asked an elderly woman named Martha, her voice trembling with a mixture of fear and curiosity.

The hobgoblin hopped from one foot to the other, unable to contain its excitement. It pointed towards the top of the tower and began to speak in a voice that was a peculiar mix of cackling and whispers. "Treasure! Glorious treasure! Hidden within the walls of this ancient tower!" Gasps of surprise and anticipation filled the air as the hobgoblin's words settled in. The dinner party guests exchanged glances, their imaginations already racing with thoughts of adventure and riches. With a collective decision, they formed a plan to uncover the secrets hidden within Blacko Tower.

Days turned into weeks as the group embarked on their quest, carefully searching every nook and cranny of the tower. They discovered hidden passageways, secret compartments, and intricate puzzles that tested their wit and resolve. The hobgoblin proved to be an invaluable guide, leading them with mischievous hints and cryptic riddles.

As they delved deeper into the mysteries of the tower, the bond between the dinner party guests grew stronger. They laughed together, supported each other through challenges, and celebrated each small victory. It was no longer just about the treasure; it was about the journey they shared and the friendships they formed.

Finally, after many trials and tribulations, the group reached the heart of the tower. They stood before a magnificent, ornate door, covered in ancient symbols and guarded by an eerie silence. With a mixture of trepidation and anticipation, they pushed open the door, revealing a sight that left them awestruck.

Before their eyes lay a treasure trove beyond their wildest dreams. Gold and jewels sparkled in the soft glow of candlelight, reflecting a rainbow of colors. It was a sight that took their breath away.

The hobgoblin, standing proudly by their side, let out a joyous laugh, its eyes twinkling with satisfaction. It had fulfilled its role as the guardian of the tower, guiding worthy souls to the treasure that lay hidden for centuries.

The dinner party guests, overwhelmed with gratitude, thanked the hobgoblin for its guidance and the adventure it had brought into their lives. They shared the treasure amongst themselves, but more importantly, they shared a lifelong bond forged through their journey together.

Blacko Tower became a symbol of their extraordinary tale, a place where dreams were realized and friendships were formed. The hobgoblin remained a legend whispered by the townsfolk, a mischievous guardian who brought magic and wonder to the world.

And so, the tale of the hobgoblin and Blacko Tower was passed down through generations, a reminder that sometimes the most extraordinary adventures can begin with a single thud and a mischievous creature leading the way.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle/

Brendon Lally, a name etched in the annals of unsolved murder cases in Burnley, continued to haunt the community years after his tragic demise in 2012. The circumstances surrounding his death were shrouded in mystery, leaving his family desperate for answers.

The chilling night of Brendon's death echoed with blood-curdling screams that pierced the air. His lifeless body was discovered at the bottom of a flight of stairs, and whispers of foul play quickly spread through the neighborhood. A neighbor claimed to have heard a distressed voice exclaim, "Mum, what have you done?" at the approximate time of Brendon's demise, further fueling speculations of a dark secret concealed within the walls of the house.

Law enforcement authorities sprang into action, initiating a murder investigation that would rattle the small town. Five individuals were apprehended as persons of interest, all connected to the house later dubbed a "drinking den." The intense scrutiny weighed heavily on the community as they anxiously awaited the truth behind Brendon's untimely death.

A post-mortem examination revealed the cause of Brendon's demise to be severe head and neck injuries. However, the elusive answer to whether he had fallen accidentally or met a more sinister fate remained elusive. The lack of conclusive evidence left the case in limbo, frustrating both the authorities and the grieving family.

Brendon's sister, Mrs. Hesketh, refused to accept the inconclusive outcome of the investigation. Deeply dissatisfied with the police's handling of the case, she vowed to keep pushing for justice. Determined to shed light on her brother's death, she tirelessly sought answers, tirelessly demanding a thorough investigation.

Public sentiment mirrored Mrs. Hesketh's frustration, and pressure mounted on the police force to revisit the case. The initial response from law enforcement was met with skepticism, as it took two searches of the house to recover critical evidence. Doubts arose regarding the thoroughness of the investigation, and whispers of a cover-up echoed through the community. Despite the police spokesman's assertion that there was insufficient evidence to support the theory of foul play, Brendon Lally's name remained on the list of unsolved murder cases. The weight of his unresolved death continued to cast a shadow over Burnley, a constant reminder that justice had not yet been served.

Years passed, but the memory of Brendon Lally endured. The story of his tragic demise remained ingrained in the consciousness of the community, serving as a poignant reminder of the fragility of life and the pursuit of truth. Mrs. Hesketh's determination never wavered, and she vowed to fight until justice was served and her brother's memory could rest in peace.

The case of Brendon Lally serves as a solemn testament to the complexities and challenges of solving crimes. It stands as a reminder that some stories may remain unresolved, but the pursuit of justice endures, fueled by the unwavering determination of those who refuse to let their loved ones be forgotten. The legacy of Brendon Lally, a victim denied justice, continues to remind us that every life deserves answers, and every story deserves closure.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

Briercliffe and Extwistle value of Extwistle's lands,

Once upon a time, in the depths of history's embrace, A tale of ancient times emerges, leaving a trace. An inquisition in Whalley, with significance profound, And a license of translation, by Henry de Lacy crowned.

In the year 1283, a charter from Pontefract was obtained, Unveiling the value of Extwistle's lands, as it ordained. Eleven shillings, a sum of worth declared, For the Church of Extwistle, this value shared.

Centuries passed, and another inquisition arose, In Blackburn, on June 25, 1650, it chose to disclose. Under the Commonwealth's seal, a commission convened, To inquire and certify parochial vocations esteemed.

Briercliffe and Extwistle, distant from Whalley's sight, Yearned for a chapel, their own sacred light. Five miles from Whalley, six from any other, One hundred families united, their desire to uncover.

But fate took an unexpected twist one Thursday, On March seventeenth, in 1718's array. An accident of grave proportions unfurled, An explosion of gunpowder, changing the world.

Within Extwistle Hall, its grandeur displayed, In the large dining room, the blast was made. Captain Robert Parker, his daughters dear, Mary Townley, Betty Atkinson, filled with fear. And a child, innocent, caught in the calamity's grasp, Their lives forever altered, an ordeal to clasp. Injuries inflicted, a painful plight, As two rooms succumbed to the fiery light.

Captain Parker, plagued by agony profound, Lingered till April's twenty-first, heaven-bound. Death granted release from suffering's reign, And Burnley's old church held his eternal domain. The family, burdened by the tragedy's pall, Developed a profound disdain for that hall. Swiftly, they departed, leaving it behind, Nevermore to use it as a residence, they signed.

Whalley's ancient inquisition, a fragment of yore, A license of translation, with history to explore. Explosions and injuries, the price they paid, Extwistle Hall forever haunted, memories never fade.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

In the small town of Accrington, nestled among the rolling hills of England, stood the imposing structure known as the Broad Oak Printing Works. Once a bustling hub of activity, it now stood silent and forgotten, a relic of a bygone era. Time had taken its toll on the old building, and the machinery that once roared with life now lay dormant, covered in a thick layer of dust.

Legend had it that the printing works was haunted, and the stories whispered among the townsfolk spoke of ghostly apparitions and eerie sounds that echoed through the abandoned halls. But it wasn't until the 1970s that the true nature of the haunting was revealed.

One fateful night, the night watchman assigned to guard the premises reported a chilling encounter. As he made his rounds, he felt a sudden drop in temperature, and a spectral presence seemed to materialize beside him. A shiver ran down his spine as an icy grip clutched his arm, sending a wave of fear coursing through his veins. With trembling hands, he managed to break free from the entity's hold and hurriedly retreated to safety.

Determined to unravel the mystery, the watchman decided to leave a tape recorder in the very room where he had experienced the paranormal encounter. He hoped that it would capture something, some evidence of the strange occurrences that plagued the printing works. Setting up the device, he pressed the record button and left it to capture the unseen.

When the watchman returned to retrieve the tape, he anxiously played it back, unsure of what he would hear. The room filled with the crackling sound of old audio equipment, and his heart skipped a beat as the voices of the past filled the air. It was as if the outdated machinery had come alive once more, with the clanking of metal and the whirring of gears resounding through the speakers.

Curiosity turned into awe as the watchman realized that nothing in the room had been activated during the recording. The machines remained motionless, covered in layers of neglect. Yet, their ghostly echoes had found their way onto the tape, defying all logical explanation.

Word of the tape spread throughout the town, and soon the Broad Oak Printing Works became a subject of fascination and intrigue. Paranormal investigators and curious onlookers flocked to the dilapidated building, eager to experience the otherworldly phenomenon for themselves.

Over time, the haunting manifestation at the printing works became a well-known local legend.

Some believed it was the ghostly remnants of workers long gone, forever trapped in the rhythmic hum of the machinery they once operated. Others speculated that the imprint of their labor had somehow transcended time, etching itself into the very fabric of the building.

As years turned into decades, the Broad Oak Printing Works remained a captivating enigma.

Visitors would stand in awe, listening to the faint whispers of the past that still lingered in the air.

The haunting served as a reminder of the once-vibrant industry that had shaped the town, and the ghostly echoes were a testament to the indomitable spirit that refused to fade away.

To this day, the Broad Oak Printing Works stands as a monument to Accrington's history, its outdated machinery a silent witness to the bygone era. The sounds of working print equipment may have ceased, but the echoes of the past continue to reverberate through the halls, ensuring that the tales of the haunting manifestation are never forgotten.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Burnley woman EDITH STUART was killed in her Thornton-Cleveleys care home when her bed was set on fire in 2010.

In the small town of Burnley, there lived a remarkable woman named Edith Stuart. She had led a long and fulfilling life as a former textile weaver and had recently moved to a care home in Thornton-Cleveleys to spend her final years in peace and comfort.

However, tragedy struck one fateful night in October 2010 when a fire engulfed Edith's room at the park home. The blaze claimed her life, leaving the community in shock and sorrow. It was clear to investigators that the fire had been intentionally set, turning a peaceful sanctuary into a crime scene.

In the aftermath of the fire, two individuals were arrested, giving hope to Edith's grieving family that justice would be served. However, as the investigation progressed, the evidence proved inconclusive, and the suspects were released. The case grew cold, and the person or persons responsible for Edith's untimely demise remained at large.

Two years later, in 2012, a coroner presided over an inquest into Edith's death. He declared it an unlawful killing and expressed his deep disappointment that no one had been brought to justice for the heinous act. During the proceedings, it was revealed that someone had deliberately held a flame to the side of Edith's bed, causing the fatal fire. To further confound the investigators, a green lighter, not belonging to Edith, was discovered in her bedroom, despite her being a non-smoker.

Suspicion fell upon the care workers who had been on duty that tragic night. Conflicting accounts arose regarding their whereabouts when the fire alarm sounded. The discrepancies in their testimonies raised questions, leaving investigators uncertain about the truth. Despite the suspicions, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) ultimately determined that there was insufficient evidence to charge either care worker in connection with Edith's death.

Edith's family, devastated by their loss and frustrated by the lack of progress, continued to seek justice for their beloved matriarch. They pleaded with the public, hoping that someone, somewhere, might come forward with crucial information that could lead to the identification and conviction of Edith's killers.

Years passed, and the memory of Edith Stuart's tragic death began to fade from the collective consciousness. However, her family's determination remained steadfast. They refused to let their beloved Edith be forgotten, tirelessly campaigning for answers, justice, and closure.

The tale of Edith Stuart's mysterious and unsolved murder became a cautionary reminder for the community, a constant whisper in the ears of those who might know something but had remained silent. And though the truth had eluded them for far too long, Edith's family clung to the hope that one day, the shadows would part, the silence would be broken, and justice would prevail.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Cat Woman Bacup Weir area

In the small town of Bacup, nestled near the Weir area, a legend of mystery and magic had long been whispered among the villagers. They spoke of a peculiar creature known as the Cat Woman, whose origins were shrouded in darkness. The tale began one fateful night on a quiet farm that sat on the outskirts of town.

The farm belonged to a hardworking couple, Mr. and Mrs. Patterson. They led a simple life, tending to their crops and livestock. One evening, as the moon cast its pale glow upon the land, they discovered a mischievous cat stealing cream from their dairy shed. Enraged by the thieving feline, Mr. Patterson picked up several stones and hurled them at the creature, hoping to scare it away.

The cat, startled by the stones, darted off into the night, narrowly escaping its pursuer. But as the stones flew through the air, fate took a peculiar turn. Some of them found their mark, striking the cat in a few places. Little did Mr. Patterson know that his actions would set in motion a series of strange events that would haunt the town for years to come.

The following day, a sense of unease settled over the neighboring farm. The farmer's wife, Mrs. Thompson, was discovered in a peculiar state. Her body was covered in unexplained bruises, as if she had been subjected to a severe beating. Shock and confusion swept through the community, and whispers of witchcraft began to fill the air. The villagers could conceive only one explanation for Mrs. Thompson's condition—the bruised woman must be the infamous Cat Woman. It was believed that she possessed the power to transform into a cat, seeking revenge on those who had wronged her kind. Fear gripped the hearts of the townspeople, and tales of the mysterious Cat Woman spread like wildfire.

As the legend grew, more and more incidents occurred. Strange sightings of a black cat prowling the moonlit streets sent chills down the spines of anyone who caught a glimpse. Farmers reported missing livestock, with signs of a feline predator's presence. Superstitions and cautionary tales began to shape the town's collective consciousness. The townsfolk lived in a state of perpetual fear, never knowing when or where the Cat Woman would strike next. Some claimed to have encountered her, describing piercing yellow eyes that glowed like embers in the night. The stories became so intertwined with reality that every hiss and every rustle in the undergrowth sent shivers down their spines.

Years passed, and the legend of the Cat Woman persisted. The townspeople remained on high alert, their eyes scanning the shadows for any sign of the elusive creature. But as time went on, the Cat Woman's presence began to fade, slowly becoming nothing more than a haunting memory of a time when fear consumed their lives.

Today, the legend of the Cat Woman lives on in the folklore of Bacup. Though no one knows the true identity of the mysterious figure, the story serves as a reminder of the power of perception and the fear that can grip a community. The tale of the Cat Woman, a witch who could transform into a cat, continues to be whispered among the inhabitants, a symbol of the town's enduring fascination with the unknown. And so, in the quiet nights of Bacup, the legend lingers, forever etched in the hearts and minds of those who dare to believe in the extraordinary.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle Catlow Well Nelson Lancashire.

In the quaint village of Catlow, nestled among rolling hills and picturesque landscapes, there existed a hidden gem known as Catlow Well. Legend had it that this well was not just a source of water but also a dwelling place for mystical creatures. Whispers of the water sprite and the mischievous hobgoblin had spread throughout the village, captivating the imaginations of its inhabitants.

The well sat in close proximity to the Shooters Arms Inn, a gathering place for locals to share stories and indulge in merriment. The well's origins traced back to the 17th century when it provided pure and refreshing water to the inn. Though its history was shrouded in mystery, one thing remained certain—the well had existed since time immemorial, drawing its water from the depths of the nearby hillside.

For years, the spring had been hidden beneath overgrown vegetation until a kind-hearted local man took it upon himself to restore the well in the 1980s. He meticulously tidied up the stonework, replacing the three steps that led to the water's edge. The well basin, its original form lost to time, was meticulously re-set to its former glory. The flowing water emerged from a gracefully curved stone aperture, cascading into the square basin below. Over time, people began leaving coins in the well, their presence perhaps signifying the well's sacredness or possibly hinting at its role as a wishing well. Even during the driest spells, the spring never ran dry.

Catlow itself was a place steeped in history, and its very name bore intriguing meanings. Some believed it referred to a "battle site near the ring of stones," a nod to the ancient stone circle that once stood in Ringstone Hill, a significant site nearby. Others speculated that the name alluded to the abundance of feral cats that once roamed the area, adding an air of mystique to the village's past. As if the stone circle and feral cats were not enough, the presence of Walton Spire, a Dark Age stone menhir, loomed in close proximity, further fueling the village's rich history and sense of wonder.

As the years passed, Catlow Well became more than just a source of water for the Shooters Arms Inn. It became a cherished spot where locals and visitors alike sought solace and a connection to the magical tales whispered through generations. People would gather around the well, sharing stories of the water sprite that shimmered in the moonlit water, its delicate wings glistening with enchantment. The hobgoblin, with a twinkle in its eye, was said to have been caught on occasion, sipping mischievously from the well, before vanishing into thin air.

Children would toss coins into the well, making wishes with wide-eyed innocence, their dreams carried away on the gentle ripples. Adults, too, would make their silent appeals to the realm of magic, seeking guidance and blessings. And although the well's secrets remained veiled, the sense of wonder and possibility it inspired brought joy to all who encountered it.

Catlow Well, with its water sprite and hobgoblin, stood as a testament to the enduring power of folklore and the beauty that lies beyond the realm of ordinary life. It was a reminder that even in the most unassuming corners of the world, magic can be found, and dreams can come true if one dares to believe in the extraordinary. And so, the legends of Catlow Well continued to thrive, weaving their way into the hearts of all who visited, ensuring that the stories would be passed down through the ages, like the flowing waters of the ancient spring.

By Donald Jay

Catlow well,
Holy Well or Sacred Spring in Lancashire.

The well is located close to the Shooters Arms Inn on Southfield Lane. Not a great deal is known about it, but it was in use back in the 17th century.

In 1660 when the Inn was built the water was used by that establishment, its purity not being in doubt. But the spring itself is naturally formed, coming from deep in the hillside. It has been here since time immemorial.

For a long time the spring was overgrown, but recently in the 1980s it was restored by a local man. The stonework was tidied up and its three steps put back into place. The well basin was re-set to what it would have originally been. The water flows out of a curved stone aperture and into the square basin beneath. I have seen a few coins in the well, a sign of its sacredness perhaps, or is it a sign that this was a wishing well. The spring never dries up, even during droughts.

Catlow is a place steeped in history. The name itself is interesting. It could mean 'battle site near the ring of stones' or something to do with ferret cats. Catlow is the site of Ringstone Hill - where a prehistoric stone circle once stood. And close by stands Walton Spire, the bottom section of which is a Dark Age stone menhir.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Colne Lancashire Christmas a meal left out for the Bogart .

The small town of Colne in Lancashire was bustling with excitement as Christmas approached. The spirit of the holiday filled the air, and families prepared for a day of celebration and merriment. But little did they know that a mysterious presence would make this Christmas one to remember.

In the quaint cottage nestled on the outskirts of town, lived a family unlike any other. Auntie May and Uncle Albert were known for their kind hearts and warm hospitality. Despite the hardships of the time, they always found a way to bring joy to others. This Christmas was no exception.

Auntie May had a special tradition that she followed every year. She believed in the legends of the old, tales of magical creatures that roamed the Earth. One such creature was the Bogart, a mischievous spirit known to visit homes during the Christmas season. Auntie May firmly believed that if you left a meal out for the Bogart on Christmas night, it would bring good fortune and blessings upon the household for the coming year.

Uncle Albert, being a practical man, often teased Auntie May about her beliefs. But deep down, he admired her unwavering faith in the unknown. He decided to support her tradition and secretly joined in on the preparations.

As Christmas Eve arrived, Auntie May and Uncle Albert diligently prepared a sumptuous feast. The tantalizing aroma of roasted poultry filled the kitchen, and colorful vegetables were lovingly arranged on the table. They laughed and joked as they cooked, their hearts brimming with anticipation.

Night fell, and a soft snow began to blanket the town. Auntie May carefully set the feast on a beautifully adorned platter and placed it outside their front door. She whispered a silent prayer, hoping that the Bogart would accept their offering and bless their home.

Inside the warm cottage, Auntie May and Uncle Albert snuggled by the fireplace, sipping hot cocoa and sharing stories of Christmases past. The clock struck midnight, signaling the arrival of Christmas Day.

Suddenly, a gentle breeze rustled the curtains, and the sound of faint footsteps echoed through the house. Auntie May and Uncle Albert exchanged excited glances, their hearts filled with anticipation. They quietly crept towards the door, their eyes wide with wonder.

As they opened the door, they couldn't believe their eyes. There, standing in front of them, was a tiny, ethereal figure. The Bogart had come to visit. Its eyes sparkled with mischief, and a mischievous grin played on its lips.

Auntie May and Uncle Albert welcomed the Bogart into their home with open arms. It danced and twirled, bringing an air of magic to the room. The couple laughed and joined in the festivities, forgetting all their worries and sorrows.

As the night wore on, the Bogart vanished as mysteriously as it had appeared, leaving Auntie May and Uncle Albert with hearts full of joy and gratitude. They knew that the legend was true, and their faith had been rewarded.

From that day forward, the townspeople of Colne heard of Auntie May and Uncle Albert's encounter with the Bogart. They began to embrace the tradition, leaving meals out for the magical creature, hoping for a visit and a touch of enchantment in their own lives.

Years passed, and the tale of the Bogart and Auntie May and Uncle Albert's Christmas feast became a cherished legend in Colne. The spirit of generosity and belief in the unknown spread throughout the town, making every Christmas a time of wonder and miracles.

And so, every Christmas Eve, families in Colne continued the tradition, leaving a meal out for

the Bogart. They believed in the power of faith, kindness, and the magic that could be found in the most unexpected of places.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Lancashire.

[Colne Town Hall](#) Lancashire.

The Colne Town Hall in Lancashire stood tall and imposing, its architectural grandeur capturing the essence of a bygone era. During the day, it served as a bustling hub for administrative affairs, but as the sun dipped below the horizon, a haunting atmosphere settled upon the premises. As twilight enveloped the town, whispers of the building's eerie reputation began to circulate. Those who dared to venture near after dark spoke of unexplained phenomena that defied rational explanation. It was said that the spirits of the past roamed the hallways, their presence felt by anyone with the audacity to enter.

One fateful evening, a group of adventurous friends decided to uncover the truth behind the legends that enshrouded the Town Hall. Emma, Michael, Sarah, and David gathered outside the ornate entrance, their curiosity outweighing any apprehension they might have felt.

As they stepped through the heavy wooden doors, the air turned frigid, sending shivers down their spines. They cautiously explored the dimly lit corridors, their footsteps echoing eerily in the silence. Shadows danced and flickered across the walls, their forms elongated and distorted. Emma gasped as she caught a glimpse of a figure darting past her, disappearing around a corner. Her heart raced, and she motioned for the others to follow. The group quickened their pace, the haunting echoes of their footfalls chasing them down the passageways.

Suddenly, a chilling scream pierced the air, freezing them in their tracks. The sound reverberated through the halls, resonating with an intensity that sent tremors through their bodies. David's face drained of color, and he clutched his friends' arms tightly, seeking comfort in their presence.

As they cautiously continued their exploration, they found themselves in the basement, where the former building attendant's apartment resided. The door to the decrepit living quarters creaked open slowly, seemingly of its own accord. An icy breeze whispered through the room, making their hair stand on end.

Against their better judgment, the group stepped inside, their hearts pounding with trepidation. The air was heavy with an otherworldly energy, as if the spirits of the past were converging upon them. Sarah's gaze fell upon an old servant's bell, its tarnished surface gleaming dully. Without warning, the bell began to ring, its sound piercing the silence like a scream of distress. The group watched in awe and terror as the bell swung back and forth, as if activated by an invisible hand. The ringing grew louder and more frenzied, filling the basement with an unnerving cacophony.

Overwhelmed by fear, Emma and Michael stumbled backward, their eyes wide with disbelief. But Sarah and David stood their ground, determined to face the paranormal forces head-on. Gathering their courage, they approached the bell and grasped it firmly, attempting to still its frantic tolling.

With a final toll, the bell fell silent, and an eerie calm settled upon the basement. The apparitions that had haunted the Colne Town Hall for decades seemed to retreat into the shadows, as if acknowledging the bravery and curiosity of their human visitors.

As the four friends left the Town Hall that night, they carried with them a newfound appreciation for the unknown. The mysteries that had plagued the building for so long remained, but they also departed with a sense of fulfillment, having experienced the inexplicable firsthand. From that day forward, the legend of Colne Town Hall persisted, passed down through generations. Those who heard the tales would speak of the courageous souls who dared to venture into the heart of darkness, leaving an indelible mark on the history of Lancashire and the

spirits that forever wandered within its walls.
By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Countryside around Nelson, Lancashire

In the small countryside town of Nelson, Lancashire, a blanket of snow covered the landscape, transforming the familiar surroundings into a pristine winter wonderland. The snowfall had been particularly heavy that day, creating a picturesque scene that enchanted both young and old. Nestled among the rolling hills, there stood a quaint cottage, its wooden exterior adorned with a thick layer of snow. Inside the cozy abode, the inhabitants sought solace from the biting cold. Sarah, a young girl with an adventurous spirit, peered out of the window, captivated by the wintry landscape.

As Sarah gazed at the cottage's roof, her eyes widened with a mixture of astonishment and fear. There, imprinted on the snow-covered surface, were a series of hoof-shaped footprints. The prints spanned the entire length of the roof, continuing down the side of the wall before abruptly coming to a halt.

The sight sent a shiver down Sarah's spine. Living in the countryside, she had heard countless tales of folklore and legends surrounding the devil's mischief. The nearby Pendle Hill, notorious for its connection to witchcraft and dark tales, only fueled the locals' belief in supernatural occurrences.

News of the mysterious footprints spread like wildfire throughout the town. Concerned neighbors gathered around the cottage, their voices filled with curiosity and unease. Some whispered that it was the devil himself, roaming the countryside on a cold winter's night. Others attributed the prints to the mischievous spirits said to inhabit the area.

As the rumors swirled, a determined group of locals set out to investigate the enigmatic footprints. Led by Thomas, an elderly man well-versed in local folklore, they ventured into the snow-covered landscape, tracing the path of the hoof-shaped imprints.

Guided by their lanterns, the group followed the trail deep into the woods. The sound of their footsteps echoed through the stillness of the night as they navigated through the dense trees. The air grew colder, and an eerie silence enveloped them, heightening their anticipation.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity, they reached the end of the trail. The hoof-shaped footprints vanished into the untouched snow, leaving the investigators perplexed. It seemed as if whatever had left those prints had vanished into thin air.

Undeterred, Thomas urged the group to continue their search, hoping to uncover the truth behind the mysterious phenomenon. They scoured the area, inspecting every nook and cranny for any clue that might shed light on the incident. But despite their efforts, they found nothing. Days turned into weeks, and the mystery remained unsolved. The footprints in the snow became a local legend, spoken of in hushed whispers around fireplaces and in village pubs. Some claimed it was the devil's work, while others believed it to be a clever prank by mischievous children.

Over time, the footprints in the snow became a cherished part of the town's folklore. They served as a reminder of the enchantment and mystery that lay within the countryside, a testament to the enduring power of imagination and the enduring allure of the unknown. And so, the story of the devil's footprints in the snow became a cherished tale, passed down through generations. It reminded the people of Nelson, Lancashire, to embrace the magic that surrounded them and to never underestimate the secrets that lay hidden within their beloved countryside.

By Donald Jay.

Write a story ghostly story

Over the last 100 years or so there as been many an old man played crown green bowls on Thomas Street Bowling Green in Nelson so many now have past away but people from the area say they have seen old men still playing bowls there ghostly forms seen in the night

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

CUSTOMS AND SUPERSTITIONS (In the hear of Lancashire)

In days of old, in a land once steeped in lore, Superstitions reigned, beliefs from days of yore.
Mr. Wilkinson, with a jocose sway, Revealed customs and tales of a bygone day.

In that humble room, where old souls gathered round, Superstition's grasp on the district was found. No surprise it brought, to the aged there, Horseshoes nailed behind doors, warding off despair.

Evil spirits and witches, a fear held so strong, Blamed upon the poor and frail, decrepit throng.
Old souls like Fitt Ann and her son William, they say, Branded with dealings with the evil one's sway.

But behold, the light of education's grace, Sweeps away relics, superstitions we chase. No more shall they return, thank God, he proclaims, Reason and knowledge, the old beliefs tamed.

Ah, customs of old, the duckling stool's reign, In villages many, a tradition to sustain. A chair on a pole, a swing over water's deep, For garrulous vixens, their anger to steep.

The chair would receive them, a pest to their kin, Plunged into the water, a cleansing akin.

Drowning their fury, as deemed necessary, Cooling the scold, a disciplinary reverie.

In Worsthorne's village, by Cross House Green, A ducking-stool pit, where this sight was seen.

Cuckstool Lane it's called, a lane with a name, A reminder of customs, now never the same.

Ladies and gentlemen, our journey finds its end, Patience, I may have tested, your hearts I commend. In matters like these, dry and tedious they seem, Yet a glimpse into history, an instructive dream.

A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Wilkinson's display, And to the chairman, for guiding the way.

The meeting now disperses, minds richly fed, With tales of customs and superstitions, widely spread.

Let us treasure these stories, woven in our past, For they remind us of how our beliefs are cast.
In the ebb and flow of progress and time, We shed old customs, but keep their essence prime.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle/

After my dad's untimely demise in 1962, I found myself a lonely lad, grappling with the weight of grief and the absence of a paternal figure in my life. But amidst the sorrow, I discovered solace in the simplest of pleasures: the company of friends and the warm embrace of shared moments.

One particular sanctuary awaited me every Sunday afternoon. If I timed it just right, I could make my way to David and Susan and Peter Bray's grandma's house on Merton Street in Nelson. The Bray siblings were my closest companions, and their grandma's abode became a haven for us all. In that humble dwelling, I found respite from my own loneliness and a taste of culinary delight that still lingers in my memory.

David, Susan, and Peter Bray were siblings bound by a shared history and an unbreakable bond. We would spend countless hours exploring the nooks and crannies of our small town, embarking on grand adventures fueled by youthful imagination. But Sundays held a special place in our hearts, for it was on this day that we indulged in the simple pleasure of Grandma Bray's chip butties.

As the clock struck noon, I would eagerly make my way to Merton Street, my footsteps echoing with anticipation. The Bray household was a cozy haven, filled with the comforting aroma of home-cooked meals and the faint echo of laughter that seemed to dance within its walls. And at the heart of it all was Grandma Bray, a woman whose warmth radiated from her every smile. Grandma Bray was a figure of unwavering kindness and generosity. Her wrinkled hands worked magic in the kitchen, turning humble ingredients into culinary masterpieces. The chip butties she created were legendary in Pendle, each bite a delightful combination of crispy chips, buttered bread, and a hint of secret seasoning that elevated the dish to unparalleled heights.

As we gathered around the worn wooden table, our laughter filled the room, chasing away the shadows of our troubled times. The three of us would regale Grandma Bray with tales of our adventures, our voices intertwining in a symphony of youthful exuberance. Her eyes sparkled with genuine interest as she listened, her love for us palpable in every word and gesture.

With a twinkle in her eye, Grandma Bray would place before us the much-anticipated chip butties, arranged with care on mismatched plates. We would devour them with gusto, savoring each bite as if it were a treasure. In those moments, the world seemed to fade away, and all that mattered was the simple joy of friendship, good food, and the love we found within those four walls.

Years have passed since those cherished Sundays in Nelson, and life has taken us on divergent paths. The Bray siblings and I have each carved out our own destinies, our memories intertwining with the ebb and flow of time. But the bond we forged, nurtured by Grandma Bray's love, remains unbreakable.

Today, as I reminisce about those carefree days, I find solace in the memories we created and the love that filled our hearts. I can still taste the chip butties, still hear the echoes of laughter, and still feel the warmth of Grandma Bray's embrace. And though my dad may have left this world too soon, I am forever grateful for the love and kindness that surrounded me, even in the darkest of times.

The chip butties may have been the highlight of those Sundays, but it was the love and togetherness we shared that made them truly special. And as I carry those memories with me into the present, I am reminded of the power of simple pleasures and the profound impact they can have on a young, lonely lad searching for a place to belong.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Mohammed Arif, Nelson

Decades had passed since Mohammed Arif's tragic death, but the memory of the brutal attack still lingered in the town of Nelson. The community remained haunted by the unsolved murder, a wound that refused to heal. The sense of injustice pervaded the atmosphere, as if the very streets whispered of a dark secret waiting to be unveiled.

Years turned into decades, and the case grew colder with each passing day. The initial fervor and determination to catch the killer gradually waned, overshadowed by new crimes and pressing investigations. Yet, within the hearts of those who remembered, the hope for justice flickered like a candle in the night.

Detective Sarah Reynolds had recently joined the Nelson Police Department, determined to make a difference in her hometown. She had heard of the unsolved murder of Mohammed Arif during her training, and it gnawed at her conscience. With a fierce determination burning within her, she delved deep into the archives, meticulously combing through old files, witness testimonies, and evidence.

As she pored over the details, she couldn't help but notice a peculiar connection. A year prior to Mohammed's murder, there had been reports of racially motivated incidents in Nelson. The tensions had simmered beneath the surface, leaving an indelible mark on the community. Sarah couldn't shake off the possibility that Mohammed's attack might have been a result of the same underlying hatred.

Driven by a newfound resolve, Sarah embarked on a quest to retrace the steps of the investigation. She sought out witnesses who were still living in the area, hoping that the passage of time might have loosened their tongues. One by one, she knocked on doors and engaged in conversations, piecing together fragments of the past.

Through her relentless pursuit of the truth, Sarah managed to track down an elderly resident who had witnessed the attack on Mohammed Arif all those years ago. With trepidation and a hint of fear in their eyes, they recounted the horrifying scene that had unfolded before their eyes. Sarah listened intently, her mind racing to connect the dots.

The witness mentioned a group of four people who had approached the scene, causing the assailant to flee. Sarah's instincts told her that those individuals might hold the key to unlocking the mystery. She embarked on a mission to locate them, scanning public records, and seeking assistance from the community.

Days turned into weeks, but Sarah's determination never wavered. Finally, a breakthrough came when an old photograph emerged, depicting a gathering from the 1980s. In the background, Sarah recognized the faces of the four individuals who had stumbled upon the crime scene that fateful night.

With the information in hand, Sarah painstakingly tracked down each of the individuals and arranged to meet them one by one. As she delved into their memories, she unraveled a tale of fear, regret, and secrets buried deep within their souls. One by one, they confessed to witnessing the attack on Mohammed Arif but had chosen to remain silent all these years, haunted by their own guilt and fear of retribution.

Together, they recounted the details of that dreadful night, painting a vivid picture of the assailant. It became clear that the murderer was a local, someone deeply ingrained within the fabric of Nelson's community. Sarah realized that she had to act swiftly before the threads of justice slipped away once again.

With renewed vigor, Sarah reassembled the pieces of the investigation, revisiting old evidence and connecting it with the newfound testimonies. She presented her findings to her superiors,

urging them to reopen the case. The department, impressed by her dedication and the weight of the evidence, agreed to give it another chance.

The investigation gained momentum, as officers revisited the crime scene, interviewed witnesses once more, and combed through old forensic evidence. The town of Nelson, too, rallied behind Sarah's efforts, eager to see justice finally served.

Months turned into years, but Sarah remained undeterred. With the tireless determination of a bloodhound, she pursued every lead, scrutinizing the tiniest details until one day, a breakthrough emerged. A discarded piece of evidence, long overlooked, contained a DNA match.

The DNA belonged to a man with a long history of violence, one who had slipped through the cracks of justice for far too long. As the handcuffs closed around his wrists, the weight of Mohammed Arif's death finally lifted from the shoulders of the community.

The trial that followed was a somber affair, as the town of Nelson bore witness to the long-awaited reckoning. The man responsible for the brutal murder of Mohammed Arif was finally held accountable for his heinous act. The courtroom erupted in a mix of relief, sorrow, and closure.

Sarah Reynolds, the determined detective who refused to let Mohammed's memory fade into obscurity, stood at the forefront of the crowd, her eyes meeting the tearful gazes of Mohammed's family. In that moment, she knew that the pursuit of justice was never in vain.

As the years passed, Nelson began to heal from the wounds of its past. The memory of Mohammed Arif remained etched in the collective consciousness, a reminder of the community's resilience and the power of relentless pursuit. His name would forever be associated with a chapter in Nelson's history, a tale of darkness overcome by the unwavering light of justice.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The tale of the Pendle Witches and how a nine-year-old girl would condemn her family to death

Demdike's granddaughters, Jennet Device

Once upon a time in the troubled land of Lancashire, there lived a young girl named Jennet Device. At the tender age of nine, Jennet was already accustomed to a life of hardship and uncertainty. She was an illegitimate child, born into a family plagued by poverty and whispered rumors. But little did she know that her actions would forever seal the fate of her own kin, becoming a dark chapter in history known as the Pendle witch trial.

Jennet resided with her mother, Elizabeth, her grandmother Demdike, her older sister Alizon, and her brother James in the shadow of the imposing Pendle hill. Their humble dwelling was situated in a village that had earned a notorious reputation as a haven for trouble-makers and subversives. The locals whispered about Demdike, who was deemed a "cunning woman" by the villagers, suggesting her involvement in occult practices.

In the year 1612, the winds of suspicion and fear blew over Lancashire, and the specter of witchcraft loomed large. The authorities, eager to quell the rising unrest, sought out individuals to blame. It was during these dark times that Jennet's life took a fateful turn. One day, the doors of justice swung open, and Jennet found herself standing before the court. Elizabeth, her mother, wailed at the sight of her daughter, but Jennet demanded her removal from the proceedings. Climbing onto a table with an eerie calmness that belied her young age, she accused her mother of practicing witchcraft. Her words resonated with the jury, and her convincing testimony sealed her family's fate.

After a two-day trial filled with testimonies, accusations, and a fervent belief in the supernatural, all of Jennet's family members, including her beloved grandmother Demdike, were pronounced guilty of causing death or harm through witchcraft. The echoes of the gavel were quickly replaced by the chilling sound of the gallows' creaking rope. The following day, Jennet's family and many of their neighbors were executed at Gallows Hill, their lives claimed by the hysteria of the times.

Time marched on, and the echoes of the Pendle witch trial began to fade. Yet, fate had a cruel twist in store for young Jennet Device. In the year 1633, two decades after the trial that had condemned her family, she found herself ensnared in a web of accusations once again. This time, a ten-year-old boy named Edmund Robinson accused Jennet and sixteen others of practicing witchcraft.

The accusations, although serious, faced a more skeptical England. The judges demanded physical evidence and scrutinized the claims carefully. Eventually, Edmund confessed that he had lied, influenced by the haunting tales of the infamous Pendle witch trial. The judges, displeased with the situation, referred the case to the Privy Council.

The last known record of Jennet Device was in 1636, where she seemed to vanish from the annals of history. The locals believed that she had married and sought refuge across the border in Yorkshire, far from the troubled land that had seen her childhood torn apart by fear and accusations.

Jennet's tale remains a haunting reminder of the dangers of misinformation, fear, and the devastating consequences that can arise from the words of a child. The legacy of

the Pendle witch trial lives on, a testament to the fragile nature of justice and the ease with which innocence can be lost in the face of hysteria.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle,

Drunken Cavalier Billinge - Stork Hotel (aka Stork Inn) Haunting Manifestation Further Comments: This drunken Cavalier was once seen in the men's toilets and can sometimes be heard moving around at night.

In the quaint village of Billinge stood the historic Stork Hotel, affectionately known by the locals as the Stork Inn. The centuries-old building exuded an air of elegance and mystery, its walls echoing with tales of the past. One such story that lingered in the hushed whispers of the villagers was that of the Drunken Cavalier.

Legend had it that during the turbulent times of the English Civil War, a dashing cavalier had frequented the Stork Inn. Sir William Huntington, a flamboyant and boisterous nobleman, had sought solace within the comforting embrace of the inn's walls. Clad in his resplendent red coat and adorned with a plume-topped hat, Sir William was known for his insatiable thirst for both ale and adventure.

On a fateful winter's night, as the snowflakes fell gently upon the village, Sir William Huntington arrived at the Stork Inn, his breath heavy with the chill of the bitter winds. His boisterous laughter echoed through the halls, drawing the attention of patrons who gathered around to revel in his tales of war and conquest.

As the night grew darker and the ale flowed freely, Sir William's mirth turned into drunken stupor. He stumbled through the inn, finding his way to the men's toilets, where he sought solace from the chaos of battle that haunted his mind. It was here, within the dimly lit confines, that the spirit of the Drunken Cavalier found its eternal abode.

Over the years, the presence of Sir William's apparition became a haunting manifestation in the Stork Inn. Some claimed to have seen a translucent figure clad in a vibrant red coat stumbling through the hallways, searching for his lost comrades. Others whispered of hearing the faint clinking of a tankard, as if Sir William still sought his beloved ale even in the realm of spirits. Night after night, the inn's current occupants would occasionally catch a glimpse of the Drunken Cavalier, swaying from side to side as he traversed the ancient corridors. His ethereal presence became a peculiar comfort to some, a reminder of the inn's rich history and the battles fought on its doorstep.

Intrigued by the tales of the Drunken Cavalier, a local historian named Amelia set out to uncover the truth behind the haunting manifestation. Armed with a journal filled with historical accounts, she delved deep into the annals of the English Civil War and the life of Sir William Huntington.

Through her meticulous research, Amelia unearthed the tragic fate of the cavalier. Sir William had met his demise on a snowy night, betrayed by a fellow soldier in the heat of battle. His body lay abandoned on the blood-soaked fields, his spirit forever tied to the inn where he had sought refuge from the horrors of war.

Armed with this newfound knowledge, Amelia ventured into the Stork Inn one moonlit night. As the clock struck midnight, she stood in the hallway where the Drunken Cavalier had last been seen. With utmost respect, she whispered a heartfelt plea for Sir William's restless soul to find peace and forgiveness.

As if in response to her entreaty, a gentle breeze caressed Amelia's cheek, carrying with it the faint sound of laughter. The air grew still, and a sense of tranquility washed over the inn, as if a burden had been lifted. From that night forward, the sightings of the Drunken Cavalier became rarer, and the echoes of his steps grew fainter.

Though the tales of the Drunken Cavalier continue to circulate among the villagers, the Stork Inn stands as a testament to a bygone era. Its walls hold the secrets of the past, and those who

visit can't help but wonder if Sir William's spirit still lingers, watching over the inn that had once been his refuge.

By Donald Jay,

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY OF SIR NICHOLAS ASSHETON, OF DOWNHAM,
DATED 1617

June 1st, 1617

Today I paid a visit to John Parker, hoping to persuade him to join the commission in favor of my cousin Robinson against Sir Thomas Metcalf. The situation between them has escalated to a level of lawlessness that resembles a civil war. It is imperative that we bring about a resolution and restore peace to Raydale House in Wensleydale.

June 4th

This evening, an ominous event unfolded. Sir Thomas Metcalf arrived at Raydall House with a group of about 40 armed men. They came at sunset, carrying guns, bills, picks, swords, and other weapons. They laid siege to the house where my aunt Robinson resided with her three young children. Frightened, she quickly closed the door and sought an explanation from Sir Thomas. She inquired about the reason for this use of force, asking whether it was for the possession of the house and land and, if so, by what authority. She also proposed that if Sir Thomas' claim was stronger than her husband's, who was currently in London, she and her family would quietly vacate the premises.

To her dismay, Sir Thomas Metcalf replied insolently, refusing to provide her with any satisfactory answers. He proclaimed that his will was the only authority he needed at that moment. Moreover, his men prevented my aunt from entering the house to retrieve her essential belongings, such as stockings, headdress, and shoes. She was left with no choice but to embark on a long journey, walking for miles with her young children to a nearby town called Buske.

From there, they continued on foot to Morton, enduring great hardship along the way.

Throughout the night, the house was bombarded with gunfire and repeatedly breached, yet somehow it remained under my aunt's control.

June 5th

Desperate for help, my aunt sought assistance from Mr. Midloms and Sir Arthur Daykin, two justices of the peace. Sadly, they were unable to offer her any remedy for the situation. Left with no alternative, she embarked on a double-horse ride to York to plead her case before the Council.

Within Raydall House, my aunt left behind her three sons—John, William, and Robert Robinson—and seven loyal servants and retainers. Among them was a boy named Tom Yorke, who had recently arrived from Knaresborough. Alongside the serving maids, these brave individuals valiantly defended the property, maintaining their hold against the lawless, rude, and unruly company that threatened them. The attackers seemed devoid of morals or restraint, their actions driven by desperation and a lack of respect for the law.

It is my fervent hope that my aunt's journey to York will yield the assistance she so desperately needs. The situation at Raydall House is perilous, and the lives of those within hang in the balance. I shall continue to document the events as they unfold, praying for a swift and just resolution to this troubling conflict.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

12 November 1892

Extraordinary Discovery on Extwistle Moor

The news of the extraordinary discovery on Extwistle Moor spread like wildfire through the small village and neighboring towns. People were abuzz with curiosity and speculation. The notion of unearthing a box containing a dead body was shocking enough, but the enigmatic words written on the accompanying card, "The missing link," added an air of mystery and intrigue.

Rumors circulated rapidly, and soon the story reached the ears of Professor Samuel Thornfield, a renowned archaeologist and anthropologist known for his expertise in human evolution. Fascinated by the peculiar find, Professor Thornfield decided to journey to the village and investigate the matter himself.

Arriving at Swinden Cottage, the residence of Mr. Tattersall Wilkinson, Professor Thornfield was greeted by a group of curious locals eagerly awaiting his arrival. They led him to a dimly lit room where the mysterious box had been placed on a sturdy table. The air was thick with anticipation as the professor approached, his eyes gleaming with excitement.

With great care and solemnity, Professor Thornfield began to examine the box. It was made of weathered wood, bearing the marks of time and exposure. The hinges creaked as he gingerly opened it, revealing the contents within.

As the lid swung open, the room fell into a hushed silence. Nestled amidst a bed of ancient cloth lay a remarkably preserved body—a humanoid figure frozen in time. Its features were both familiar and peculiar, displaying a mixture of primitive characteristics and those akin to modern humans. The missing link, perhaps?

The onlookers gasped, their imaginations running wild. Some speculated that this could be the key to unraveling the mysteries of human evolution, a breakthrough that would rewrite the history books. Others pondered the implications for science, philosophy, and religion.

Professor Thornfield meticulously examined the body, his trained eye discerning details that the untrained observer might miss. As he observed the skeletal structure, the shape of the cranium, and the morphology of the limbs, a sense of awe washed over him. This discovery had the potential to reshape our understanding of human origins.

Days turned into weeks as the professor devoted himself to unraveling the secrets of the missing link. He consulted with fellow experts, studied ancient texts and fossils, and meticulously documented his findings. News of the discovery spread far and wide, attracting the attention of scientists, scholars, and curious minds from around the world.

However, despite their best efforts, the true nature of the missing link remained elusive. Some argued that it could be an elaborate hoax or a remarkable example of ancient artistry. Skeptics emerged, challenging the authenticity of the find, while others championed its significance, eager to believe in its profound implications.

Amidst the fervor and debates, Professor Thornfield continued his tireless pursuit of the truth. He subjected the body to a battery of scientific tests, searching for clues buried within its ancient DNA. Every discovery brought new questions and complexities, pushing the boundaries of human knowledge.

Years passed, and the missing link remained an enigma, shrouded in the mists of uncertainty. Although the initial excitement faded, the impact of the discovery lingered, forever altering the trajectory of scientific exploration.

The box and its contents found their way into museums, where they became objects of

fascination and contemplation. They served as a reminder of the countless mysteries that lay hidden within the folds of time, awaiting the curious minds of future generations.

The missing link became a symbol—a testament to the inherent human desire to understand our place in the vast tapestry of existence. And so, the story of Extwistle Moor and its mysterious discovery echoed through the ages, inspiring generations to seek answers, challenge conventions, and unravel the enigmas of our shared past.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

George Lyon From Billinge

Riding on his horse, this former highwayman passes through the village where he once hid out. In the quiet village of Billinge, nestled amidst rolling hills and picturesque landscapes, there existed a tale that sent shivers down the spines of its inhabitants. The story revolved around a phantom figure known as George Lyon, a former highwayman who haunted the area since the 1920s.

Legend had it that George Lyon was a notorious outlaw, renowned for his audacious robberies and daring escapades on horseback. The village of Billinge served as his refuge, a place where he hid from the authorities and plotted his next misdeeds. It was said that he was cunning, his knowledge of the surrounding countryside allowing him to evade capture time and time again. However, fate had a peculiar way of catching up with the wicked. One moonlit night, as George Lyon galloped through the winding lanes on his trusty steed, he encountered an unfortunate accident that cost him his life. Some say it was a misstep, while others whispered of a vengeful act by a rival gang member.

From that moment on, George Lyon's spirit refused to rest. It was said that he appeared on foggy evenings, riding through the village astride his ghostly horse. Witnesses described him as a shadowy figure dressed in tattered garments, his face hidden beneath the brim of a worn hat.

As the decades passed, the tale of George Lyon became ingrained in the village's folklore. Parents shared the eerie legend with their children, cautioning them to stay indoors after dark and avoid the lonely roads where the phantom rider was said to appear. Though many were skeptical, there were those who claimed to have witnessed his haunting manifestation.

Old-timers spoke of hearing the distant sound of galloping hooves echoing through the night, accompanied by the rustling of leaves in the wind. Some claimed to have seen George Lyon pass them by, his spectral form evoking a mixture of fear and awe. The air turned icy cold in his presence, and his mournful gaze seemed to pierce through the very souls of those unlucky enough to meet his spectral gaze.

Over time, the legend of George Lyon took on a different meaning. The village's younger generation saw him not only as a fearsome apparition but as a symbol of the area's history and resilience. Local artists depicted him in paintings and sculptures, while authors wove his tale into gripping novels. He became a tourist attraction, drawing visitors who sought a brush with the supernatural.

As years turned into centuries, the spirit of George Lyon continued to haunt the village of Billinge. His presence served as a reminder of a bygone era, a testament to the dark and daring past that once unfolded within those very hills. The legend persisted, passed down from one generation to the next, ensuring that George Lyon would forever be a part of the village's fabric. And so, to this day, as the moon rises high in the night sky, the ghostly figure of George Lyon can still be seen galloping through the village of Billinge, eternally bound to the land he once called home.

By Donald Jay

The Randon Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Gisburn Forest.

Once upon a time, nestled in the picturesque countryside, there lay a charming township called Gisburn Forest. Throughout the year, this place offered a myriad of experiences for its visitors. Whether one preferred to explore on foot, horseback, or bike, Gisburn Forest had something to offer to everyone. Its enchanting trails led adventurers through popular routes and secluded glades, while the forest's accreditation as a Dark Sky Discovery Site made it a perfect destination for stargazing after dusk.

Gisburn Forest, the largest forest in Lancashire, held a rich history dating back centuries. Near the western border of the parish, beside Brown Hills Beck, stood a magnificent bowl barrow—a testament to the Neolithic or Bronze Age eras. This oval mound of earth, standing 10 meters high and measuring 40 by 30 meters, whispered ancient stories of bygone times. Another similar mound could be found across the stream in Easington, adding to the air of mystery that shrouded the area.

The manor of Gisburn Forest had deep roots in history, recorded in the Domesday Book. It was once part of the Percy Fee, a significant landholding. In 1189, Matilda de Percy, the widow of William de Beaumont, 3rd Earl of Warwick, bestowed grazing rights and timber privileges to Sawley Abbey. The generous donation was made official by Matilda's grandnephew, William de Percy, 6th Baron Percy, in 1211 when he donated the entire manor.

Over time, ownership of the manor changed hands. In the 16th century, it fell into the possession of Thomas Browne, who acquired the largest estate in the township from his relative, Mary, the third wife of Sir Robert Burdett. Grunsagill, the center of this vast estate, became an integral part of the Gisburn community.

Gisburn held historical events of note, such as the granting of the charter for Gisburn Fair by King Henry III in 1260. This lively market took place every Monday, accompanied by an annual three-day fair, commencing on the Eve, Day, and Morrow of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The fair boasted a wide array of goods for sale, including wooden vessels—perhaps used for meals and buckets in ancient times.

In the heart of Gisburn, two ancient "instruments of justice" once stood—the Stocks and the Cuck Stool. Although their exact locations remain unknown, it is believed that the Stocks, a form of punishment for men, resided in the Market Place, while the Cuck Stool, a ducking stool for women, stood near running water.

To the north of the village, along the Settle road, stood a Norman-era earthen castle known as Castle Haugh. Also called Cromwell's Basin, this circular mound with its 5 to 6-meter height commanded impressive views of the surrounding Ribble Valley. Nearby, an opened "barrow" revealed a crude earthen urn, evoking thoughts of ancient rituals and burials.

Transportation played a crucial role in the history of Gisburn, with the Roman road from Ribchester to Ilkley passing through the parish. This connection to the Romans showcased the township's significance in the region.

In 1749, a petition was made to the Lord of the Manor of Gisburn to erect a Market Cross. The request shed light on the vibrant market culture that extended beyond cattle trading. It was evident from the petition that the market encompassed various activities, including the ancient sport of bullfighting, as it asked for the Cross to be erected in the Bull Ring. The Cattle Market, which was held in the Main Street until recently, added to

the town's liveliness. Two public wells provided water to the community in those times. Adorning the north side of the church was the magnificent Gisburne Park mansion, which once served as the residence for the holders of the esteemed title "Lord Ribblesdale." The park itself boasted roaming cattle of great repute. The park's entrance featured two stunning Gothic-style lodges adorned with intricately carved figures and pinnacles—an architectural marvel designed by a previous Lord Ribblesdale. The Lister family, who later adopted the title "Ribblesdales," resided at Westby Hall on the Blacko Road, adding to the area's historical lineage.

Legends and tales intertwined with Gisburn's history, such as the visit of Oliver Cromwell, who stayed for a night or two in Gisburne. His troopers, in need of stabling for their horses, took shelter in the village church, causing damage to the stained glass windows. The Listers of that era cautiously aligned themselves with the Parliamentary cause, lending support to Cromwell and his soldiers.

The township's connection to the Church remained strong. At the northeastern end of the churchyard stood the Priory, although not the original structure. Local lore suggested that the former house may have been inhabited by Nuns, possibly those from Rayhead in Gisburn Forest, who were once patrons of the Church.

History's darker side left its mark on Gisburn as well. In the early 15th century, the area suffered from lawlessness and violence. In 1401, a Vicar of Skipton traveling between Sawley and Gisburn fell victim to a brutal murder. The Rector at the time, Thomas Banaster, had to request the Bishop's intervention to cleanse the churchyard after such bloodshed. The tale of the Gisburne Martyr echoed through the ages, recounting the story of Richard Simpson, a priest, schoolmaster, and martyr. Initially a Protestant Minister and Schoolmaster, Richard converted to Roman Catholicism and faced persecution from the Protestants. He went into hiding, continuing his missionary work in various parts of Lancashire. As School Master in Gisburne, he became known by the nickname "Guile." Eventually, in 1588, he met his fate, being executed near Derby. His head and quarters were displayed on poles, a gruesome sight. Yet, in an act of reverence, they were later stolen and given a proper burial.

Gisburn's tale intertwined with the nearby Pendle area, infamous for its stories of witches. One such connection was found in the Arraignment and Trial of Jennet Preston of Gisburn in Craven, documented in a pamphlet printed in London in 1612. Jennet, who had received kindness and hospitality from the Westby family, was accused of murdering a child. After her release from York Castle, she attended a gathering of witches at Malkin Tower, seeking assistance to harm her prosecutor, Martin Lister. Shortly afterward, Lister died, and witnesses at Jennet's trial testified that he had identified her as the cause of his demise. Her guilt was sealed when she touched Lister's dead corpse, causing it to bleed fresh blood—an indication of her status as a murderer. Jennet was found guilty and met her fate on the gallows, showing no remorse or fear. Her husband, present at the execution, expressed satisfaction at her deserved punishment.

Over time, the spelling of Gisburne changed to Gisburn when the Railway Company proposed the alteration, arguing that it would save numerous hours each year. The railway line was opened in 1885, ushering in a new era of transportation and connectivity. The hamlets surrounding Gisburn showcased their own unique charm, with farmhouses boasting exquisite mullion windows, cozy Ingle Nook fireplaces, and beautiful beams.

Among the hamlets, Paythorne housed a Wesleyan Chapel constructed in 1830, while Horton boasted a Congregational Chapel established back in 1670. Rimington also had

a Congregational Chapel dating back to 1817. Rimington was also the residence of Francis Duckworth, a composer known for his hymn tunes. One of his popular compositions, "Rimington," was often sung to the hymn "Jesus Shall Reign." Francis Duckworth found his final resting place on the northeast side of the churchyard, with a gray granite memorial bearing the musical notes of his beloved tune. Throughout the years, Gisburn's history unfolded like a rich tapestry, interweaving tales of nobility, religious strife, and local legends. As time moved forward, the township continued to evolve, embracing progress while honoring its remarkable past.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Grey Monks Bebington - Church and graveyard Haunting Manifestation.

These robed figures float above the ground, 'walking' where the path was once much higher.

In the quaint town of Bebington, nestled amidst rolling hills and surrounded by an air of mystery, there existed a small church and graveyard. With its ancient stones and weathered tombs, it stood as a testament to the passage of time and the tales it held within. However, there was one legend that sent shivers down the spines of the townsfolk—a haunting manifestation known as the Grey Monks.

The Grey Monks were said to be spectral figures, robed in ethereal grey garments, who defied the laws of the living. Stories of their appearances circulated among the villagers, whispered in hushed tones on cold winter nights or shared over fireside gatherings. Some claimed to have seen them floating above the ground, as if defying gravity, while others spoke of their ghostly presence walking upon paths that had long since eroded away.

Nobody knew when the first sighting had occurred, nor did they understand the purpose behind the Grey Monks' apparitions. The townsfolk believed that their presence was an omen, a harbinger of impending doom or a sign of great misfortune to come. Fear gripped the hearts of the people whenever tales of the Grey Monks circulated, and caution became a way of life in Bebington.

Among the residents, there was a young woman named Emily, a curious and adventurous soul who couldn't resist the allure of the unknown. Her inquisitive nature often led her to explore the mysteries that surrounded her town, and the legend of the Grey Monks was no exception.

Despite the warnings and fearful glances she received, she was determined to uncover the truth behind the spectral figures that haunted Bebington.

One moonlit evening, with a sense of trepidation and excitement in her heart, Emily made her way to the church and graveyard. The wind whispered through the ancient stones, carrying echoes of forgotten tales. As she stepped through the gate, a shiver ran down her spine, but she pressed on, her curiosity pushing her forward.

Standing among the tombstones, Emily closed her eyes, trying to connect with the spirits of those who had passed. She whispered a plea for guidance, a request for the truth to reveal itself. And in that moment, a soft, otherworldly glow began to emanate from the ground.

The air around her grew still as the Grey Monks materialized before her, their ethereal forms floating just above the earth. Their eyes, filled with wisdom and sorrow, peered into Emily's soul, as if assessing her intentions. Yet, there was no malice in their presence, only an ancient sadness that resonated deep within her.

In a voice that seemed to echo from a distant era, the lead Monk spoke, "Child of curiosity, you have sought us out. We are the keepers of forgotten knowledge, bound to this realm by the weight of unfinished stories. It is not doom we bring, but a plea for remembrance."

Emily's heart pounded in her chest as she listened, captivated by their words. The Grey Monks continued, recounting tales of lost heroes, forgotten sacrifices, and the untold histories of Bebington. They revealed themselves not as vengeful spirits but as guardians of the town's forgotten legacy.

Filled with a newfound purpose, Emily vowed to honor the Grey Monks' request. She dedicated herself to preserving the stories and legends of Bebington, ensuring that the sacrifices of those who came before would not fade into obscurity. With each passing day, she became a conduit for the voices of the past, sharing their tales with the present.

As the years went by, the sightings of the Grey Monks became less frequent, their apparitions growing fainter. The people of Bebington, no longer living in fear, found solace in the

knowledge that their history was being safeguarded, their ancestors' stories finding new life through Emily's efforts.

And so, the legend of the Grey Monks transitioned from a tale of haunting to one of reverence. They became a symbol of the town's rich heritage, a reminder that the past should never be forgotten. And as long as the stories were told and the memories preserved, the Grey Monks would forever be part of Bebington's tapestry, their spectral presence woven into the very fabric of the town's identity.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Hilda approached the farmhouse, a chill wind whispered through the trees, causing the branches to sway and dance.

Hilda was a curious and adventurous woman, always on the lookout for mysteries and hidden tales. Living in the picturesque countryside of Pendle Hill in Lancashire, UK, she had heard whispers of strange happenings in the old farmstead that stood on the outskirts of the village. One day, driven by her insatiable curiosity, Hilda decided to investigate the farmstead for herself. The locals warned her about the dark history that enveloped the place, but she paid no heed to their cautionary tales. Armed with a camera and a determination to uncover the truth, she set off towards the farmstead.

As Hilda approached the farmhouse, a chill wind whispered through the trees, causing the branches to sway and dance. The atmosphere was heavy with an eerie stillness, as if the very air held its breath in anticipation. Undeterred, Hilda pushed open the creaky wooden gate and stepped into the yard.

The farmhouse loomed before her, its weathered walls bearing witness to the passage of time. With each step she took, the floorboards beneath her feet creaked in protest, as if echoing the forlorn souls that once resided within these walls.

Steeling herself, Hilda made her way up the worn-out staircase that led to the upper floor. She had heard that it was in one particular bedroom that strange occurrences had taken place. The room was said to be haunted by the spirit of a farmhand who had tragically ended his own life many years ago.

Upon reaching the top of the stairs, Hilda found herself standing before the bedroom door. It was weathered and worn, its paint chipped and faded. With a deep breath, she turned the rusty doorknob and slowly pushed the door open.

As the door creaked open, Hilda's heart skipped a beat. The room before her was suffused with an otherworldly aura. Dust particles danced in the beams of sunlight that filtered through the tattered curtains. It was a solemn and haunting sight.

Hilda cautiously entered the room, her eyes scanning every corner. The air felt heavy, laden with a palpable sense of sadness. It was then that she noticed the frayed rope hanging from the doorframe. The very same rope that had taken the life of the tormented farmhand so many years ago.

As Hilda gazed at the rope, a strange sensation washed over her. Whispers seemed to fill the room, faint at first, but growing louder with each passing moment. The air around her grew colder, and a shiver ran down her spine.

Suddenly, a voice echoed in her ears, chilling her to the core. "Why have you disturbed my eternal slumber?" it demanded. Hilda turned around to find a shadowy figure standing before her, its features obscured by darkness.

"I seek the truth," Hilda replied, her voice steady despite her trembling body. "I want to understand the story behind this place, the secrets it holds."

The shadowy figure remained silent for a moment, its form wavering as if caught between realms. Then, with a sigh that seemed to carry centuries of sorrow, it began to speak.

"I was a lost soul, burdened by despair and anguish. I took my own life in this very room, hoping to find peace in death. But instead, I found myself trapped, forever bound to this earthly plane," the spirit whispered mournfully.

Hilda listened intently as the spirit recounted its tale of woe, the circumstances that led to its tragic end. It spoke of a love lost, of a broken heart and a life consumed by darkness. Its words were filled with remorse and regret, a haunting reminder of the human capacity for despair.

Moved by the spirit's story, Hilda offered her empathy and understanding. She promised to shed

light on the farmhand's forgotten tale, to ensure that his memory would not be lost to the annals of time.

As the conversation drew to a close, the spirit's form began to fade, its presence growing ethereal. With a final whisper of gratitude, it vanished into the air, leaving Hilda standing alone in the room.

Hilda felt a mixture of sadness and relief. She had uncovered the truth behind the haunted farmstead, bringing peace to a tormented soul. With her camera in hand, she captured the essence of the room, preserving the story for generations to come.

Leaving the room, Hilda descended the staircase, her heart lighter than before. She knew that the spirit would finally find solace in the knowledge that its tale had been heard.

And so, as she walked away from the farmstead, Hilda couldn't help but reflect on the strange and wyrd nature of existence. In the depths of Pendle Hill, she had encountered the darkness of a tragic past, but through her compassion and determination, she had also found a glimmer of redemption.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Ightenhill Castle Burnley

In the peaceful countryside of Ightenhill, nestled amidst sprawling fields and verdant landscapes, stood the remnants of a forgotten past—the once majestic Ightenhill Castle. Although time had eroded its grandeur, the castle's rich history lingered in the whispers of the wind.

Centuries ago, the lords of the manor, the de Lacies, made their temporary dwelling within the fortified walls of the castle. The imposing structure overlooked the vast Pendle Forest, where noble game roamed under the watchful eye of diligent foresters. The tranquil Calder's stream meandered through the valley below, its waters merging with the tributary of Pendle water.

Ightenhill Castle held a commanding position, perched upon the highest elevation in the park. Its residents were treated to a breathtaking panorama that stretched as far as the eye could see. To the west, Pendle Forest sprawled, offering a sanctuary for the hunt. The lords of the land reveled in the sport, surrounded by their retinue of foresters, reeves, agisters, and verdurers. The view from Ightenhill Manor House was an exquisite tapestry of rolling hills and meandering rivers—a sight that truly captured the essence of natural beauty.

Once a royal manor, Ightenhill Castle had likely hosted royalty itself. Its existence could be traced back to the year 1238, a testament to its long-standing significance. This factitious manor, formed by the consolidation of several smaller manors, held court twice a year to administer justice and uphold the rule of law. Burnley, Filley Close, new Laund Booth, Reedley Hallows, and Briercliffe-with-Extwistle were among the amalgamated manors that comprised Ightenhill.

In the annals of history, it was recorded that Ightenhill housed a royal horse breeding establishment. In 1251, Edmund de Lacy obtained a charter of free warren, securing his park at Ightenhill. The castle, even then, was considered ancient and dilapidated. A survey conducted in 1522, during the tenure of Sir John Towneley as the lessee, revealed its ruinous state, with crumbling walls and decayed chambers. The castle never underwent restoration, and when the Shuttleworths of Gawthorpe assumed ownership of the park after the Towneleys, Ightenhill Castle had vanished entirely, leaving only traces of its former glory.

James McKay, in his extensive work on "Pendle Hill in History and Literature," shed light on the castle's vibrant past. He painted a vivid picture of the days when Ightenhill would come alive with pageantry, minstrelsy, and outdoor spectacles as the de Lacies traversed between their castles in Clitheroe and Pontefract. The castle served as a place of judgment, where offenses committed within the neighboring Forest of Pendle were tried. Even during times when the lords of the Honor of Clitheroe were absent, the castle remained under the vigilant care of the Parker of Ightenhill—the esteemed title held by the park-keeper. Through generations, this designation became a surname, forever linking the Parker family to the castle's legacy and becoming the origin of other notable lineages, including the Parkers of Royle.

As time continued its relentless march forward, Ightenhill Castle faded into the realm of folklore and whispers. Its stories echoed in the minds of those who walked through the fields and gazed upon the solitary farmhouse that now stood upon its once hallowed ground. But the essence of the castle, its resplendent heritage, and the echoes of the

past would forever be a part of the collective memory

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Poem,

In a world where kindness is often fleeting,

In a world where kindness is often fleeting, Let's gather the words, our hearts entreating. A poem we shall weave, with love as our guide, To teach respect, and the spirit inside. Parents, oh guardians of life's tender bloom, Nurture their souls in compassion's gentle room. From their lips, let wisdom's river flow, Plant seeds of empathy, let them deeply sow. Schools, the sanctuaries of knowledge and growth, Where minds blossom and horizons both loath. In these hallowed halls, let respect take its stance, A lesson to be learned in every single chance.

Religion, a beacon of faith's sacred grace, Let its teachings echo in every sacred space. In prayers and sermons, let tolerance unfurl, Unifying hearts, embracing every boy and girl. Vandalism, a tempest that shatters trust, A destructive storm, leaving souls nonplussed. Instead, let's teach hands to create, not destroy, Preserving beauty, fostering shared joy.

Let care be bestowed upon the old and frail, Their wisdom a treasure, a poignant tale. Their spirits resilient, deserving of our aid, A debt of gratitude, on their path, we laid.

The sick and disabled, warriors unseen, Heroes of strength, in battles unforeseen. May our love be their armour, our support their might, Together we'll march, embracing their light.

So, let us write these words in every heart, A symphony of respect, a timeless art. For in unity we find strength and grace, Embracing humanity, leaving no soul misplaced.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

In the heart of Burnley, nestled on Colne Road, stood the Tivoli Cinema, a place that had witnessed countless tales of laughter, suspense, and wonder. For decades, it had been a source of entertainment and joy for the people of Burnley. However, its final act was about to unfold.

It was the fateful day of May 15, 1973, when the curtain was drawn for the last time, and the Tivoli Cinema prepared to bid farewell to its beloved audience. The once-thriving cinema had transformed into a bingo club in its later years, but now it faced a different fate. The Duke Bar gyratory road improvement scheme demanded its demolition.

However, the Tivoli Cinema held more than just memories of laughter and movie magic.

Legends whispered through the corridors that it was haunted. The tales of ghostly apparitions and eerie occurrences had spread far and wide. The staff, gripped by superstition, avoided the backstage restrooms, fearing encounters with spectral entities.

Even Mr. Brian Tattersall, the former managing director of Unit Four cinemas Ltd., who had overseen the Tivoli's operations from 1964 to 1968, admitted his reservations. "I have always been a skeptic," he said, "but I wouldn't have cared to venture backstage by myself late at night." While the cinema had garnered a good reputation within the community, it had also experienced rowdy nights during the era of rock 'n roll. Memories of slashed seats and thunderous noise still resonated within Mr. Tattersall's mind. But there were other recollections that brought a smile to his face.

He reminisced about the days when the Tivoli welcomed around 300 children for its Saturday afternoon performances. To ensure their delight, Mr. Tattersall would instruct the projectionist to turn up the volume. The cinema would come alive with the jubilant sounds of young voices singing, feet stomping, and laughter filling the air. Those were the moments he cherished, where the spirit of the Tivoli Cinema was at its brightest.

As the demolition crews arrived, wielding their tools of destruction, the Tivoli Cinema stood as a testament to a bygone era. The once vibrant building now awaited its final act. The walls that had reverberated with laughter and applause were now poised to crumble and fall.

Residents of Burnley gathered nearby, watching with a mixture of nostalgia and sadness as the Tivoli gradually disappeared before their eyes. Some recalled their cherished memories of first dates, family outings, and shared moments of awe within the cinema's walls. Others whispered tales of ghostly encounters, wondering if the spirits within the Tivoli would finally find peace.

With each swing of the wrecking ball, the Tivoli's grandeur diminished, and its memories became fragments of history. The haunted legends and the rowdy nights faded away, leaving behind a void in the hearts of those who had experienced the magic of the Tivoli Cinema.

And so, the Tivoli Cinema met its end, a bittersweet finale to an era of joy and enchantment. Its legacy would live on in the hearts and memories of the people of Burnley, who would forever cherish the moments they had spent within its hallowed halls. As the dust settled and the demolition concluded, the Tivoli Cinema's spirit joined the tapestry of Burnley's history, its story forever etched in the annals of time.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

In The late 1960s there was a terrible accident out side of Lamberts wood yard Nelson a Burnley Colne and Nelson bus was in an accident with a wagon the bus driver was killed he was beheaded in the accident now the rout from Brierfield to Nelson is haunted by a phantom bus

In the quiet town of Nelson, nestled in the heart of England, an eerie tale from the late 1960s still sends shivers down the spines of locals. It was a time when the roads were less crowded, and the streets were devoid of the bustling traffic that fills them today. However, there was one particular accident that would forever haunt the route from Brierfield to Nelson.

Just outside Lambert's Wood Yard, where the scent of freshly cut timber hung in the air, tragedy struck. A Burnley Colne and Nelson bus, carrying weary passengers on their daily commute, collided with a massive wagon. The impact was devastating, instantly claiming the life of the bus driver. In a cruel twist of fate, he was tragically beheaded in the accident.

From that fateful day forward, whispers began to circulate about a spectral presence haunting the route between Brierfield and Nelson. Locals claimed to have witnessed a phantom bus travelling along the road, its transparent form gliding silently in the misty twilight. The spectral vehicle was said to be a haunting reminder of the bus driver who had lost his life so tragically. Passengers who found themselves waiting at the desolate bus stops after dusk often spoke of a chilling atmosphere that settled over them, as if an otherworldly presence loomed nearby. Some described hearing disembodied whispers, barely audible yet laden with an inexplicable sorrow. Others claimed to have seen a shadowy figure, dressed in the uniform of a bus driver, staring out from the driver's seat of the phantom bus.

As the years passed, the legends grew, captivating the imagination of locals and enticing thrill-seekers from far and wide. Ghost hunters flocked to the haunted route, armed with cameras and recording devices, hoping to capture evidence of the supernatural. Some reported capturing eerie photographs, revealing ghostly outlines and mysterious orbs of light that danced in the darkness. Over time, the ghostly sightings became part of the fabric of everyday life in Nelson. Children swapped tales around flickering campfires, daring one another to venture out onto the haunted route after nightfall. Adults, too skeptical to believe in the supernatural, couldn't help but cast wary glances out of their car windows as they passed the ominous spot.

Despite the stories, the phantom bus seemed to harbor no malice. It appeared to be forever trapped in a loop, forever replaying the tragic accident that claimed its driver's life. Some believed that the spirit sought closure, unable to rest until justice was served or a final message delivered.

As time marched on, the stories of the haunted bus faded into local lore, blending with the whispers of the past. The phantom bus became a part of Nelson's rich history, an enigmatic reminder of the fragility of life and the lingering power of tragedy.

So, if you ever find yourself traveling through Nelson on a quiet evening, keep an eye out for the ghostly silhouette of an old bus. And remember, tucked away within the eerie mist, the spirit of a bus driver continues his eternal journey, forever traversing the haunted route from Brierfield to Nelson.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

In the picturesque countryside of Noggarth, nestled between rolling hills and a meandering river, stood a modern farmhouse that held the echoes of an ancient past. The house, rumored to have been constructed upon the remnants of a grander structure from the thirteenth century, had a fascinating history rooted in the presence of the monks from Kirkstall Abbey.

Long ago, the monks of Kirkstall Abbey had claimed the farm as their own retreat, seeking solace and respite from the demands of their religious lives. These wise men of God had possessed a knack for selecting the most fertile and breathtaking locations for their abbeys, with serene valleys and abundant resources. However, in the present era of industry and progress, such choices were met with amusement and skepticism.

As time moved forward, the affairs of Kirkstall Abbey faced a decline. Debt burdened the once-prosperous institution, and their sources of income were depleted by exorbitant interest payments. Even their livestock had been consumed in their struggle for survival. It was during these challenging times that Abbot Hugh of Kirkstall found himself in London, endeavoring to find a solution to their financial predicament.

On the morrow of St. Martin in the year 1287, Abbot Hugh penned a letter to his beloved brethren at Kirkstall Abbey. Writing from the Castle of Reginald, he chronicled the dire circumstances the abbey faced and the difficulties they encountered in seeking support. Abbot Hugh had approached their patron, the Earl of Lincoln, and beseeched him for assistance.

In his letter, Abbot Hugh enumerated the lands owned by the abbey in Blackbournshire, as well as the additional properties in Roundhay, Schadwell, and Seecroft. These lands, combined with the four pounds they received annually from the exchequer at Pontefract, amounted to a meager sum of £41 17s. 9d. However, the abbot believed that this revenue could be sold for £413 17s. 6d., offering a temporary solution to their financial woes.

Desperate to procure the necessary funds, Abbot Hugh implored his brethren to send money by any means possible, even if it required diverting funds meant for sacred purposes. The abbot's plea reflected their unprecedented destitution and his fervent hope for sustenance while toiling in the vineyard of the Lord.

Eventually, the abbey's financial burdens were alleviated through an agreement with Henry de Lacy. They decided to sell their estates in Blackbournshire, including Extwysell, for a sum equivalent to ten years' worth of revenue. This arrangement provided some respite to Kirkstall Abbey during a time of great uncertainty.

As history unfolded and the era of monasteries came to an end, the Manor of Extwistle passed into the hands of John Braddyl. However, he soon sold the property to the Parkers, a family that would hold ownership of the estate for generations to come.

Thus, the farmhouse in Noggarth, standing upon the remnants of an older structure, continued to witness the passage of time. It served as a testament to the perseverance and resourcefulness of the monks who had once sought refuge in those fertile lands. And although the world had changed, the echoes of their presence lingered, telling a story of devotion and resilience through the ages.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

In the picturesque village of Mereclough, nestled amidst rolling hills and tranquil meadows, there existed a tale of valor and determination. It was a story that had etched its mark on the landscape, weaving its way into the fabric of local folklore. The tale revolved around a fateful clash between two legendary fighting cocks, Ormerod's Butterfly and Towneley's Caesar. The heart of the village was adorned with a quaint and humble inn, aptly named the Fighting Cocks. Its weathered timbers and worn stone walls had witnessed countless tales of revelry and camaraderie. Yet, it was the story of the epic battle that had taken place just outside its doors that captured the imaginations of those who dwelled there.

On a bright and crisp morning, the village Green served as the battleground for an eagerly anticipated showdown between Ormerod's Butterfly and Towneley's Caesar. The air was thick with anticipation as villagers and enthusiasts gathered around the makeshift cockpit, their eyes fixed on the feathered warriors.

The combatants strutted with regal confidence, their vibrant plumage shimmering in the sunlight.

The atmosphere was charged with a palpable sense of competition as the two majestic birds eyed each other intently, fully aware of the impending clash that would decide their fate.

As the fight commenced, the crowd erupted in cheers and applause, their voices blending with the fluttering wings and crowing calls. The clash was fierce and relentless, each blow resonating through the field, sending tremors of excitement through the spectators.

In a sudden turn of events, Caesar unleashed a powerful strike, sending Butterfly tumbling to the ground. Gasps of disbelief rippled through the onlookers, and Ormerod, the proud owner of the fallen bird, felt his heart sink with the weight of defeat. Convinced that the battle was lost, he hastily retreated from the scene, his footsteps heavy with disappointment.

But fate, as capricious as it may be, had other plans in store. Just as Ormerod distanced himself from the field, a roar of jubilation erupted, echoing in his ears. Perplexed and intrigued, he halted in his tracks and turned to gaze upon the spectacle he believed he had lost.

To his astonishment, Butterfly, defying all odds, had risen from the ground, his spirit unbroken and his determination unyielding. In a display of unwavering resilience, he launched a relentless assault upon Caesar, turning the tables on his adversary. The crowd erupted in exultation, their voices echoing through the valley, celebrating the triumph of the gallant Butterfly.

Caesar, once a formidable contender, now lay defeated at the hands of the indomitable Butterfly. Ormerod's joy knew no bounds as he rejoined the fervent crowd, his heart brimming with pride for his resilient champion. It was a victory that defied expectations and immortalized the memory of the fighting cocks that had graced Mereclough.

In honor of this historic event, the inn that stood witness to the valiant battle forever bore the name of the Fighting Cocks. Its sign proudly displayed a verse that recounted the tale for all who passed by:

"For heaps of gold and silver we do fight; Death comes at every blow if it hits right. Towneley's great Caesar doth bleeding lie: Killed by Ormerod's gallant Butterfly."

And so, the legacy of the Fighting Cocks at Mereclough endured, a testament to the unyielding spirit and the unpredictable turns of fate that reside within the realm of mortal combat. The tale would be told and retold, ensuring that the valor of Butterfly and the echoes of their battle would forever resonate within the hearts of those who knew their story.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.
Painting of Worsthorne old Hall.

In the quaint village of Worsthorne, a time of brutal and bloodthirsty spectacles was still within living memory. The remnants of a savage past clung to the hearts and minds of the villagers, as they spoke in hushed tones of the last bull bait that had taken place.

It was a day etched in the memory of young and old alike. The bull, a creature owned by the notorious Jim Anson, was tethered to a stake near the very gates of the present-day church. Excitement filled the air as the preparations were made for the gruesome spectacle.

The game was simple, yet cruel. The bull, restrained by a fifteen-yard tether, awaited its fate. The signal was given, and a powerful bull terrier was unleashed upon the enraged beast. The dog's goal was to seize the bull by its nose, while its master desperately clung onto one of the dog's forelegs. The victor would be declared if they could maintain this tenuous grip for three long minutes.

Among the spectators gathered that day was a man known as Old Nick O'Ellises, accompanied by his formidable dog, Crib. Old Nick was a sight to behold, marred by the scars of smallpox and bearing a prominent cherry-red nose. It was a matter of debate among the onlookers as to whether the dog or its owner was the more pleasing to the eye.

Amidst the cries and cheers of the crowd, the battle ensued. The bull and the dog locked in a primal struggle for dominance. The ground trembled under their combined fury as they strained against one another. Time seemed to stand still as the minutes ticked away, each second an eternity for the participants and the anxious spectators.

In the end, it was Old Nick O'Ellises and his loyal Crib who emerged victorious. The dog's relentless grip and the man's unwavering strength had prevailed. The crowd erupted in applause mixed with a twinge of unease. For while the outcome thrilled the senses, the savagery of the contest left an indelible mark on their consciousness.

The reminiscences of Worsthorne did not end with the horrors of bull baiting. The village also bore witness to another blood sport, the brutal practice of cockfighting. The bottom of the moor served as the battlegrounds, where men gathered during the middle of the previous century to witness these cruel spectacles.

"Mains" were fought on Sundays, drawing participants from all walks of life. Astonishingly, the vile game attracted not only the lower classes but also members of the upper echelons of society. Even the local gentry could be found among the eager onlookers, waiting for the battles to commence.

However, the true anticipation arose when the arrival of old Jimmy Roberts, a renowned cotton manufacturer from Burnley, was announced. His presence was heralded by the rhythmic sound of hooves as he rode atop his trusty bay pony. It was said that the fights would not commence until the distinguished Jimmy Roberts graced the scene.

Jimmy Roberts, born in 1779 and meeting his demise in 1830, possessed a charisma that demanded attention. His reputation as a patron of this cruel sport had earned him a place of honor among the spectators. As he arrived, the fervor of the crowd heightened, and the proceedings began, fueled by his presence.

These barbaric practices persisted until the year 1830, when a changing tide of sentiment led to their gradual demise. The memories of those times, however, continued to haunt the village of Worsthorne, a testament to a past steeped in darkness and cruelty. As the years passed, the villagers learned to cast off those horrific traditions, embracing a more enlightened and compassionate way of life.

And so, the reminiscences of Worsthorne served as a reminder of a bygone era, a stark contrast to the peaceful and harmonious village that now thrived in its place.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

In the quiet town of Accrington, nestled on Pendle Street, stood a house shrouded in mystery. The year was 1965, and the once-happy home at 38 Pendle Street had become a place of fear and unease. Whispers of a haunting manifestation circulated among the townsfolk, spreading like wildfire through the community.

The house, with its aging Victorian architecture, held secrets that whispered through its halls. Its walls seemed to hold memories, and its rooms echoed with the remnants of a troubled past. It was rumored that the entity that haunted this residence was unlike anything anyone had ever encountered before.

The townspeople spoke of a strangely shaped apparition, a glowing specter that radiated an eerie light. Those who dared to venture close to the house claimed that just being in its presence sent shivers down their spines. The very air around the house seemed to vibrate with an otherworldly energy, an invisible force that invoked a profound sense of unease.

As the rumors spread, so did the tales of the haunting encounters experienced by the unfortunate residents who once called this house their home. Bumps in the night, scratching sounds that came from nowhere, and a pervasive feeling of being watched plagued those who dwelled within its walls.

The first family to encounter these spectral phenomena was the Johnsons. John and Margaret Johnson, along with their two young children, moved into 38 Pendle Street with high hopes and dreams for a happy life. However, it didn't take long for their dreams to turn into a haunting nightmare.

At first, the disturbances were subtle, barely noticeable. A flickering light here, an unexplained chill there. But as time went on, the manifestations grew bolder and more terrifying. Objects would move on their own accord, floating eerily through the air, defying the laws of gravity. Shadows danced along the walls, taking on shapes that defied logic.

The Johnsons' children, Michael and Sarah, became especially affected by the haunting. They would wake up in the middle of the night, drenched in cold sweat, claiming to have seen a spectral figure standing at the foot of their bed. Their once-innocent faces turned pale with fear, and sleep became a distant memory.

Desperate for a solution, the Johnsons sought the help of local paranormal investigators.

Together, they set out to uncover the truth behind the haunting of 38 Pendle Street. Armed with cameras, audio recorders, and an unyielding determination, they delved into the dark history of the house.

Through extensive research, they discovered that the house had a tragic past. Decades earlier, a family had lived in the very same residence, suffering from deep emotional turmoil. The father, a troubled man, had taken his own life within those walls, leaving behind a profound sense of grief and despair.

The investigators believed that the manifestation haunting the house was the tormented spirit of the deceased father. His pain and anguish had become trapped within the walls, his presence eternally tied to the home he once lived in.

Armed with this knowledge, the investigators devised a plan to help release the spirit from its earthly bounds. They conducted a séance, reaching out to the troubled soul, offering solace and understanding. Slowly, the presence began to fade, its grip on the house and its inhabitants loosening.

Over time, the haunting diminished, and a sense of peace settled over 38 Pendle Street. The Johnsons, grateful for the return of tranquility, moved on, leaving the house behind, a relic of a haunting past.

To this day, the house on Pendle Street stands as a testament to the supernatural, a reminder that the past can leave its mark on the present. Its ghostly tales continue.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The names of the Pendle witches who were hanged on Gallows Hill are: Anne Chattox (Anne Whittle), Anne Redfern, Elizabeth Device, James Device, Alizon Device, Jane Bullock, John Bullock, Katherine Hewitt (Mouldheels), Alice Nutter and Isobel Robey. Jennet Preston, who lived in Yorkshire, was hanged in York. There's no record of what happened to the bodies of the Pendle witches after Gallows Hill.

In the quiet town of Lancaster, where history and mystery coexisted, a place of dark legends stood tall: Gallows Hill. Perched on a hillside next to the imposing Ashton Memorial and overlooking Williamson Park, it was a haunting reminder of the town's chilling past. For centuries, it had been the favored execution site of the Hanging Judges, witnessing countless lives brought to a sudden end.

But it was the infamous Pendle witches who etched their names into the annals of Lancaster's haunted history. These accused practitioners of the dark arts met their grim fate on Gallows Hill, their souls forever bound to the land they once called home. On that fateful day of August 20th, 1612, ten individuals were led to the hill to face their ultimate punishment.

As the sun sank beneath the horizon, casting eerie shadows upon the desolate landscape, the Pendle witches were made to stand atop a rickety cart. Fear filled their hearts as a rope was fastened tightly around their necks, the weight of their impending doom pressing upon them. The cart moved away, leaving them to meet their grisly fate.

A swift, merciful end was granted to some, their necks snapped instantly as they descended. Yet, others suffered a crueler fate, their bodies twisting and writhing as life ebbed away. It was a sight that struck terror into the hearts of the onlookers, a macabre dance of agony that seemed to resonate through the very air.

However, the story did not end there. Legends whispered that the spirits of the Pendle witches refused to rest, forever trapped between the realms of the living and the dead. Their restless souls wandered the hills of Gallows Hill, seeking solace and perhaps even revenge for the injustices they had suffered.

Late at night, when the moon cast an ethereal glow upon the land, locals would speak of strange happenings on Gallows Hill. Whispers carried on the wind, chilling echoes of forgotten pleas for mercy. Some claimed to have glimpsed shadowy figures moving among the trees, their spectral forms a haunting reminder of the past.

Superstitions thrived, and tales of mysterious happenings grew. The midnight hour became a time of dread, as it was believed that the veil between the worlds thinned, allowing the ghosts of the Pendle witches to roam freely. Locals would avoid Gallows Hill after dark, fearful of encountering the vengeful spirits.

Yet, despite the fears and warnings, there were those brave enough to venture into the heart of the haunting. Ghost hunters and thrill-seekers would make their way to the hill, armed with equipment to capture evidence of the supernatural. They sought answers to the mysteries that shrouded Gallows Hill, hoping to uncover the truth behind the spectral presence.

Some claimed to have experienced inexplicable phenomena during their nocturnal expeditions. Eerie whispers in their ears, cold gusts of wind that defied explanation, and unexplained orbs of light dancing through the darkness. The Pendle witches seemed to defy the confines of history, their spectral presence a constant reminder of the past.

However, the secrets of Gallows Hill remained elusive. There were no records of what had become of the witches' bodies after their execution. Their final resting places remained a mystery, adding to the intrigue that enveloped their tragic tale.

To this day, Gallows Hill stands as a silent witness to the events of centuries past. The Pendle

witches continue to weave their spectral presence through the fabric of Lancaster's history, their story forever etched into the very essence of the land. And as long as the moon shines upon the hillside, their restless spirits shall endure, bound by an eternal mystic connection to the place where they drew their last breaths.

By Donald Jay.

The random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

In the quiet town of Nelson, nestled in the heart of Pendle, Lancashire, stood St. Mary's Church—a solemn and aged structure with a rich history that spanned over a century. Despite its ornate beauty, the church had long been shrouded in a haunting air, with whispers of ghostly spirits that lingered in its shadowy corners.

The tales of supernatural encounters in and around the church had become the stuff of local legend. Whispers of ethereal figures gliding through the pews, faint organ music resonating from the empty sanctuary, and mysterious lights flickering in the stained glass windows were shared among the townsfolk. It was said that the spirits of former parishioners, unable to find peace in the afterlife, roamed the church grounds, longing for solace.

One misty autumn evening, as the moon cast an eerie glow upon St. Mary's, a curious teenager named Emily decided to venture into the abandoned church. Intrigued by the stories she had heard, she couldn't resist the allure of unraveling the mysteries that lay within its ancient walls. Emily pushed open the heavy oak door, and a gust of wind greeted her, causing the candles that still adorned the altar to flicker. The silence was palpable, broken only by her footsteps echoing through the empty nave. She slowly made her way toward the altar, her breath catching as she glimpsed a fleeting shadow out of the corner of her eye.

Undeterred by fear, Emily continued her exploration. She ascended the creaking stairs to the upper room, known as the Beacon Centre, where the chapel now resided. The air grew colder as she stepped into the dimly lit chamber. The scent of aged wood and ancient books filled her senses.

As Emily approached the altar, a soft whispering filled the room, accompanied by a gentle breeze that rustled the pages of the prayer books. Startled, she turned toward the sound, and her eyes widened in astonishment. Before her stood a ghostly figure, clad in antiquated priestly robes. It was the spirit of a former clergyman, his visage etched with sorrow and longing.

"Who are you?" Emily asked, her voice quivering.

"I am Reverend Samuel Turner," the spirit replied, his voice echoing with a melancholic tone. "I served this parish faithfully until my untimely demise. My spirit has remained trapped within these walls, unable to find peace."

Emily's heart filled with empathy. She listened intently as Reverend Turner shared his tale—a tale of unrequited love, dashed dreams, and a deep-rooted desire to find redemption.

Overwhelmed by compassion, she vowed to help him find solace and bring peace to the tormented souls that dwelled within the church.

Word spread quickly throughout the town of Emily's encounter with the restless spirits of St. Mary's Church. The townsfolk, fueled by a newfound curiosity and determination, joined her in her quest to understand and appease the haunted souls.

Together, they researched the church's history, delving into archives and dusty tomes. They discovered the stories of parishioners who had suffered tragic fates, unfulfilled dreams, and heart-wrenching losses. It became evident that the spirits yearned for closure and forgiveness. With the support of the Heritage Trust for the North West, the townsfolk organized a series of memorial services, where the names and stories of the departed were honored and their souls remembered. The church once again became a sanctuary for the living and the dead, bridging the gap between the earthly realm and the ethereal plane.

As each service concluded, a sense of tranquility settled upon St. Mary's. The flickering lights ceased, the whispers faded, and the haunting presence transformed into one of benevolence. The restless spirits, their yearning finally acknowledged, found solace and gradually moved on to the next realm.

St. Mary's Church, once a place of sorrow and lost souls, was now a symbol of unity,

compassion, and healing. The Beacon Centre, with its newly restored chapel, became a sanctuary for spiritual seekers and a testament to the power of human empathy. And so, the haunting tales of St. Mary's Church transformed from tales of fear and trepidation to stories of resilience, redemption, and the enduring power of community. The spirits of the church and the local area found their peace, forever etched in the annals of Nelson's history—a testament to the enduring legacy of St. Mary's and the compassion of those who called it home.

By Donald Jay

The random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle,
a tea-totaller

In the realm of merry spirits and frothy delights, A holly beer retreat once danced in my sights.
But alas, dear friends, a change has taken its hold, For Brother Dutton, Thwaites, and Massey, I
am told, No longer embrace the brews, their hearts have been set, On a path sans ale, a tea-
totaller silhouette.

No more shall the golden nectar grace their lips, No more shall they revel in its sweet, bubbling
sips. Their desires have shifted, their choices now clear, To walk a different path, to bring a
change near. And so, I find myself at a crossroads profound, With tea in my hands, my old
friend left unfound.

Tea, the elixir of calm, with its soothing embrace, Shall guide me now, as I traverse this new
space. No more the ale's effervescent mirth shall I seek, But in tea's gentle warmth, a solace I
shall speak. From delicate leaves to a cup that's serene, A tea-totaller journey, a path yet unseen.

Though my heart yearned for the laughter in a pub, Where jesters regaled and the spirits would
rub, I'll find joy in conversations, clear and bright, With sober reflections, a newfound delight.
For the camaraderie, the tales we will share, Is not confined to pints, but a spirit aware.

So, here I stand, bidding farewell to the ale, Embracing the tea, with a smile that won't fail. No
longer a beer retreat, but a different retreat, Where clarity and tranquillity softly meet. Brother
Dutton, Thwaites, and Massey inspire, To cherish the moments, to let the heart transpire.

A tea-totaller journey, an odyssey profound, In the choice to abstain, a new world is found. With
tea as my guide, I'll explore and partake, In the wonders of life, new adventures awake. So, raise
your teacups, let us toast to the day, When paths diverge, but still, we find our own way.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

In the secluded and picturesque manorial house of Burwains, nestled beneath the protective shelter of a low hill, a rich history unfolded. The house, constructed in 1642 by Jno. Briercliffe, bore witness to the turbulent times of the English Civil War, standing as a testament to the ancient lineage of the Briercliffes who had resided there since the Norman Conquest.

Burwains, situated in the Walverden Valley with breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape, held stories that stretched back centuries. The Briercliffes, along with other local families such as the Parkers and Halsteads, remained devoted to their Catholic faith and loyal to the ill-fated Stuart dynasty during the Reformation and the ensuing tumultuous times.

Exploring the halls of Burwains, one could stumble upon a hidden gem—a small room that had once served as a Catholic chapel. The ornate moldings on the ceiling, niches on the walls, and family crests adorning the mantelpiece told tales of the devout faith and heritage of the Briercliffes and Parkers. The house held ancient stone fonts, repurposed in unexpected ways, like one serving as a plant pot in the garden.

While the original sixteenth-century fireplace had been walled up and replaced, remnants of the past still lingered. The dining room showcased a collection of exquisite old English pewter plates and dishes, their gleaming surfaces reminiscent of silver. And on the landing, a finely carved oak cist bore the inscription "M.S., 1666," hinting at a wedding gift bestowed upon Margaret Briercliffe, a descendant of John Briercliffe, upon her marriage to William Sagar of Catlow Hall.

Marriages between the Sagars and the Robertshaws, the present owners of Burwains, were not uncommon throughout history, as evidenced by old documents. One such document, dated 1663, revealed a receipt from Richard Tattersall to his brother-in-law William Sagar, absolving him of financial obligations and showcasing their marks as neither could sign their names.

Delving into the depths of the house, one could discover an intriguing collection of weapons, rusted and weathered, a testament to the times when townships supplied men-at-arms. Burwains served as the repository for Briercliffe, preserving these relics from a bygone era, including rapiers and flint firelocks.

Even the coach-house of Burwains held its own history. It had once been the meeting place for Baptists over a century ago, before the construction of the old chapel at Haggate. The stories whispered within its walls, echoing the faith and struggles of those who sought solace and community.

Amidst the grandeur and antiquity, tales of ordinary life also emerged. An anecdote recounted the mishap of a three-bottle man, returning from Colne Fair in the early morning hours with his wife seated behind him on a pillion. Unbeknownst to him, she had slipped into the brook at Catlow Bottoms. Arriving home, he discovered her absence and sent servants to find her. They discovered her lying in the stream, her head cradled on a sand bed, uttering words that spoke of a different time and place.

The clough that crossed Burwains was bridged by a high wall, where wooden troughs carried water from a spring to the manor house—a far cry from the modern convenience of iron pipes and syphons. History intertwined with innovation as time progressed.

Yet, not all stories held moments of joy. An unfortunate incident occurred during a rush bearing celebration at Holmes Chapel in the early 19th century. A member of the Briercliffe family, fueled by alcohol and rage, engaged in a fatal quarrel with a local farmer. Fleeing from justice, he enlisted as a sailor, serving under Sir John Norris. However, his desertion led him back to Holmes Chapel, where he hid in the woods before being captured and meeting his fate on the gallows in Lancaster.

Despite such tragic events, the Briercliffe family endured. Descendants still lived in the vicinity

of Burnley, carrying on the legacy of their illustrious lineage. John Briercliffe resided in Ashton-under-Lyne, while Mary Ann Briercliffe had married Mr. Jobling, a butcher. Even in America, a descendant of the Briercliffes had lived until about 12 years ago.

Burwains stood as a testament to the rich tapestry of history, a dwelling where generations had lived, loved, and left their mark. Within its walls, stories whispered of faith, love, turmoil, and ordinary moments, intertwining to paint a vivid picture of one of the oldest and most illustrious families in East Lancashire—the Briercliffes of Burwains.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Father and Son Bebington - Leasowe Castle (also known as Mockbeggar Hall Haunting Manifestation Many years ago, this couple were captured by the castle's owner. Rather than be tortured, the father killed his son and then killed himself - their ghosts have since been reported standing over peoples' beds.

In the small town of Bebington, nestled by the rugged coastline, stood a magnificent structure known as Leasowe Castle. Its grandeur was only matched by the mysteries that shrouded its ancient halls. Legends whispered tales of haunting manifestations, chilling the hearts of those who dared to enter its eerie domain.

Deep within the castle's history lay a tragic story that had become a part of local folklore. Many years ago, a couple found themselves ensnared by the castle's sinister owner, a man whose cruelty knew no bounds. Faced with a gruesome fate, the father made a choice that would forever scar the castle's walls and etch their names into the annals of tragedy.

Rather than endure the torment that awaited them, the desperate father took the life of his beloved son. In a moment of profound despair and heart-wrenching anguish, he extinguished the light from the innocent child's eyes. Overwhelmed by guilt and consumed by sorrow, the father, in an act of final desperation, turned the blade upon himself, ending his own tortured existence. The air within Leasowe Castle became heavy with the weight of their tragedy, and their spirits lingered, unable to find peace. Witnesses would later recount eerie encounters, where the apparitions of a sorrowful father and his innocent son would materialize, standing silently over people's beds in the dead of night.

Visitors and locals alike would whisper tales of waking to find the pale specters at the foot of their beds, their eyes filled with a deep sadness that penetrated the very soul. Some claimed to have heard faint whispers, the ghostly murmurs of a father longing for forgiveness and a son yearning for solace.

As the years passed, the legends grew, and the spirits of the father and son became an integral part of Leasowe Castle's haunting reputation. Curious souls seeking a glimpse into the otherworldly would venture into the castle's haunted halls, armed with cameras and a mix of trepidation and fascination.

Each encounter with the spectral duo only served to deepen the mystery surrounding their tragic fate. Some visitors would feel an icy breeze pass through them, as if the tormented spirits were trying to communicate their pain. Others reported seeing fleeting glimpses of the father and son, their ethereal forms fading away as quickly as they appeared.

Among the witnesses, there were those who felt an overwhelming compassion for the souls trapped within the castle's melancholic embrace. They sought to uncover the truth behind the father's fateful decision, hoping to offer him redemption and allow the spirits to finally find peace.

Local historians delved into the castle's archives, pouring over crumbling documents and faded photographs, in search of answers. And slowly, the story began to take shape, pieced together from fragments of the past. The tragedy of the father and son unfolded, unveiling the depths of their suffering.

With newfound understanding, a group of compassionate individuals organized a solemn ceremony within the castle's ancient walls. They gathered at the very spot where the father had committed his desperate act, where the life of his innocent son was tragically cut short. Their intentions were clear—to offer forgiveness and release the anguished spirits from their eternal torment.

As the ceremony commenced, a hushed reverence fell over the assembled crowd. Words of forgiveness and compassion filled the air, their essence weaving through the haunted corridors.

And in that moment, something remarkable occurred—the spectral presence of the father and son began to wane, their ethereal forms growing fainter, as if a heavy burden had been lifted from their shoulders.

A sense of peace settled over Leasowe Castle, the weight of the past slowly dissipating. The tales of haunting manifestations began to fade, replaced by whispers of closure and redemption. The spirits of the father and son, freed from the chains of their tragic history, found solace in the embrace of eternity.

Leasowe Castle, once a place of sorrow and darkness, now stood as a testament to the power of forgiveness and the resilience of the human spirit. And though the whispers of their haunting manifestation may linger in the memories of those who had borne witness, the castle would forever be a beacon of hope—a reminder that even in the darkest of times, redemption and peace can be found.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

In the small town of Colne, the children had a peculiar fondness for concocting bizarre sandwiches

Once upon a time in the charming county of Lancashire, there lived a group of children who had a knack for turning ordinary ingredients into extraordinary snacks. These treats, although unusual to some, held a special place in their hearts and taste buds. Let me take you on a journey back to their Lancashire childhood and share their funny story.

In the small town of Colne, the children had a peculiar fondness for concocting bizarre sandwiches. One day, young Billy, known for his wild imagination, decided to create the ultimate treat—a banana butty. He meticulously chopped the banana into tiny pieces and spread them evenly on two rounds of bread. The result was a peculiar combination of flavors that surprisingly delighted the taste buds of his friends. From that day forward, the banana butty became a beloved classic in the region.

But the adventures in snack land didn't stop there. The children discovered another curious delicacy—sliced raw onion soaked in slightly sweetened vinegar. This peculiar sandwich filling sat on the dining table 24 hours a day, ready to be slapped between two slices of bread. The tangy, pungent flavor of the onion was an acquired taste, but once the children developed a liking for it, they couldn't resist this peculiar sandwich.

Not content with just onions, the children ventured further into the realm of oddity. They stumbled upon a creation called "pobbies." Pobbies were made by breaking bread into small pieces and sprinkling sugar on top. Then, warm or cold milk was poured over the sugary bread, creating a soggy yet strangely delightful concoction. It may sound unconventional, but to those Lancashire children, pobbies were a breakfast treat that brought joy to their mornings.

Raw sausages also made an appearance in their culinary adventures. Although not exactly a snack, the children couldn't resist the temptation of nibbling on a raw sausage before it made its way into the frying pan. It became a pre-cooking ritual, a quirky tradition that made the sausages taste even better once cooked. They swore by the belief that raw sausages held a secret flavor that cooked ones could never replicate.

As the children reminisced about their childhood, they recalled a friend's family who had a peculiar love for condensed milk. They found it amusing how this thick, sweet treat never appealed to them personally. But oh, the sight of their friend indulging in condensed milk brought giggles and memories that still made them chuckle to this day.

Amongst all these peculiar treats, there was one classic that stood the test of time—jam butties. The children's mothers would lovingly prepare these simple yet delightful sandwiches, spreading a generous amount of homemade jam between slices of fresh bread. These sweet treats brought smiles to their faces and sticky fingers, creating lasting memories of childhood bliss.

Another delicacy that might raise an eyebrow was a dish cooked by Billy's mother—steak and cow heel. The cow heel bones, with little bits of meat still clinging to them, were left as a special treat for Billy. He would gnaw on these bones, savoring every morsel that his mother couldn't quite remove. Billy's love for the cow heel bones, both raw and cooked, was a testament to his adventurous palate.

And so, in the heart of Lancashire, these children found joy in the most unusual of treats. Their laughter echoed through the streets of Colne as they devoured their banana butties, onion sandwiches, pobbies, and raw sausages. Their tastes may have been eccentric, but their memories were filled with laughter and the simple pleasures of childhood. And to this day, whenever they gather, they still reminisce about their Lancashire treats, laughing at the oddity of it all and cherishing the bond forged over their shared love for peculiar snacks.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

It was cold December day in 1909 when, a 28-year-old retired naval stoker traipsed into Burnley police station. The man was Joseph Wren and he was about to tell police that he had murdered a three-year-old boy, before abandoning the brutalised corpse, alone, near the town's famous Queen's Park. Wren led police officers to a field between the park and the Bank Hall Colliery, an old coal mine that is now the site of Bank Hall Park. On his way to the body Wren said very little, uttering just a single sentence as he took officers to the scene of the horrific crime: "I do not know what made me do it." exp-player-logo Elon Musk Is The World's Richest Man Again In the navy Joseph William Wren was born in December 1880 in Whinfell, Cockermouth, Cumbria, and would later move 50 miles down the road to Dalton-in-Furness. He was the youngest of four in 1881, according to that year's census, with his older brothers John, Thomas and Isaac dominating the Wren household, alongside his mother Mary Ann and his father Isaac senior.

Growing up, Joseph Wren was a quiet and reserved child. He had a fascination with machinery and technology, often spending hours tinkering with various mechanical objects. As he grew older, his passion led him to join the Royal Navy as a stoker. Serving on board naval vessels, Wren became skilled at operating and maintaining the boilers and engines that powered the ships.

After years of service, Joseph Wren retired from the navy at the age of 28, seeking a quieter life away from the rigors of military discipline. He settled in Burnley, a small town in Lancashire, England, hoping to find solace and a fresh start.

However, something dark seemed to dwell within Joseph. As the winter days grew colder, his mind became haunted by disturbing thoughts. On that fateful December day in 1909, overwhelmed by an inexplicable impulse, Wren walked into Burnley police station and confessed to a heinous crime.

The officers were taken aback by Wren's confession. They listened intently as he described the brutal murder of a three-year-old boy and the abandonment of the lifeless body near Queen's Park. With a mix of shock and disbelief, they followed him as he led the way to the field where the crime had occurred.

Wren's demeanor remained stoic and distant as they reached the grisly scene. The officers surveyed the area, their hearts heavy with sorrow and anger. It was a harrowing sight, a tragic reminder of the depths of human darkness.

Questioned about his motives, Joseph Wren could only offer a perplexed response, repeating, "I do not know what made me do it." The phrase echoed through the minds of those who heard it, an unsettling testament to the enigma that lay within Wren's troubled soul.

The subsequent investigation revealed that Wren had no previous criminal record, and no connection to the victim or his family. It seemed to be a random act of violence, driven by an inexplicable impulse that consumed Wren's conscience.

As news of the horrific crime spread throughout Burnley, the townspeople were gripped by fear and disbelief. They struggled to comprehend how such darkness could manifest within their seemingly quiet and unassuming neighbor.

Joseph Wren was charged with murder, and the town awaited the trial with a mix of anticipation and dread. The courtroom was filled with tension as the evidence was presented, painting a chilling picture of the crime committed by a man who had once served his country.

Wren's defense attorney argued that he suffered from a mental disorder, pleading for leniency on the grounds of diminished responsibility. The prosecution, however, painted a picture of a calculated and malicious act, urging the jury to deliver justice for the innocent life that had been

cruelly taken away.

After careful deliberation, the jury returned with a verdict. Joseph Wren was found guilty of murder and was sentenced to life imprisonment. The courtroom was filled with a palpable mix of relief and sorrow as justice was served.

Years turned into decades, and Joseph Wren remained behind bars, haunted by the memory of his horrific act. He never fully comprehended what had driven him to commit such a heinous crime, nor did he find solace in the years that passed.

As time went on, the town of Burnley gradually healed from the wounds inflicted by that cold December day. The memory of the tragic event lingered, serving as a reminder of the darkness that can reside within even the most unsuspecting individuals.

In the end, Joseph Wren's story remained one of inexplicable horror, forever etched into the history of Burnley—a chilling reminder that evil can exist in the most unexpected places, leaving scars that never truly fade away.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

John Dawson Location Bashall Eaves – Fields & Hedgerows in area Haunting Manifestation Shot in the back in 1934 by an unknown party, John Dawson's ghost now looks for evidence around the village that could help identify the killer.

The small village of Bashall Eaves was nestled amidst lush green fields and winding hedgerows. It was a place of tranquillity and charm, but it harbored a secret that had lingered for decades. The ghostly apparition of John Dawson, a man shot in the back in 1934, haunted the village, driven by an insatiable desire for justice.

The details surrounding John Dawson's murder remained shrouded in mystery. His life was abruptly taken away, and his killer remained unidentified. The villagers spoke in hushed whispers, sharing stories of his ghostly presence wandering through the village at night, searching for clues that could unmask the person responsible for his untimely demise. As the years passed, the legend of John Dawson's ghost grew stronger, captivating the imagination of the villagers. Some were frightened, locking their doors tightly at night, while others felt a sense of curiosity and compassion for the lost soul that wandered their streets. They wondered what they could do to assist him in finding the closure he sought.

It was on a misty autumn evening when young Emily Parker, a resident of Bashall Eaves, stumbled upon an old, dusty journal in her family's attic. Intrigued, she brushed away the cobwebs and opened its delicate pages. The journal belonged to a previous resident, and within its faded lines, she discovered a cryptic entry that seemed connected to the ghostly apparition haunting their village.

The entry spoke of a secret meeting that had taken place on the outskirts of the village on the fateful night of John Dawson's murder. The writer, whose name was withheld, had witnessed the crime unfold before their eyes. Fearful for their own safety, they had chosen to remain silent. However, their guilt had consumed them, leading them to pen down the truth within the pages of the journal.

Determined to bring justice to John Dawson's restless spirit, Emily shared her findings with the village elders. Together, they decided it was time to confront the past and find closure for both the ghostly presence and the village itself.

A public meeting was organized, inviting anyone who had information or suspicions about the murder to come forward. It was a somber evening, as villagers gathered, their faces etched with a mix of anticipation and trepidation. The air crackled with an energy born of uncertainty and the hope that truth would prevail.

As the meeting progressed, villagers began to share their stories, piecing together fragments of memories and suspicions that had lingered for years. Slowly, a collective realization began to take shape, and the threads of truth unravelled before their eyes.

A frail old man named Henry, who had kept his silence for decades, rose from his seat. Tears streamed down his weathered face as he confessed his part in the conspiracy of silence. He had witnessed the murder that fateful night but had chosen to protect himself rather than seek justice for John Dawson.

The revelation sent shock waves through the room, and a heavy silence hung in the air. The villagers looked upon Henry with a mix of sympathy and disappointment, recognizing the weight of his confession and the role it played in denying John Dawson his peace.

United in their determination, the villagers rallied around the old man, offering forgiveness and understanding. They understood that the truth had the power to heal old wounds and bring closure to a haunting that had gripped their village for far too long.

With newfound courage, Henry led the villagers to the very spot where John Dawson had lost his life. They stood together, facing the darkness that had shrouded their village for decades.

And in that moment, the ghostly apparition of John Dawson appeared before them, his ethereal form slowly dissipating, as if finally finding solace.

As the ghost vanished into the night, a sense of relief washed over the village. The burden of the unsolved murder had been lifted, and they could finally move forward, no longer haunted by the specter of the past.

John Dawson's story became a part of Bashall Eaves' history, a reminder of the importance of seeking truth and justice, even when it seemed impossible. The village healed, and the fields and hedgerows once again echoed with laughter and the simple joys of life. And though the memory of John Dawson remained, it was no longer a haunting manifestation, but a symbol of a community's resilience and the power of unity in the face of darkness.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

JONAS LEE

Jonas Lee, Extwistle Moor, A Man of Remarkable Character and Eccentricity

Introduction: Jonas Lee, a man of remarkable character and eccentricity, was born in the picturesque Valley of Thorsdean. Blessed with a robust constitution and a herculean frame, he possessed extraordinary endurance and strength. Known for his exceptional mowing skills and his ability to carry heavy loads, Jonas Lee left an indelible mark on his community. Moreover, his unconventional approach to preaching and his dedication to his beliefs further distinguished him. Although circumstances forced him to leave his beloved mountain farm, his legacy as an honest and persevering individual continues to inspire generations.

Body:

Physical Strength and Endurance: Jonas Lee's physical prowess was widely admired by his neighbors. He was known for his exceptional mowing abilities, often compared to the speed of an elderly woman walking. His physical strength was also demonstrated through his ability to carry a sack of coals on his back from the pit on Marsden Height to his mountain home at "Jerusalem" on Extwistle Moor, s. These remarkable feats of endurance showcased his determination and the impressive limits of his physical capabilities.

Unconventional Preaching Style: In addition to his physical abilities, Jonas Lee possessed a unique approach to preaching the gospel. His sermons were known for their peculiar choice of texts. On one occasion, he derived inspiration from a cart wheel, using it as a metaphor to represent Christ as the central hub and the apostles as the supporting spokes. Such unconventional interpretations served to engage his audience and spark their imagination, leaving a lasting impact on their spiritual lives.

Vision and Labor: Jonas Lee's passion for his beliefs extended beyond preaching. He undertook the construction of Thorsden Chapel, which, although now in ruins, stands as a testament to his vision and dedication. Moreover, he personally enclosed "Jerusalem Farm," named after his own distinctive style, with the stones laboriously transported by a bull-drawn cart, reminiscent of the traditions of old patriarchs. His commitment to building both a place of worship and a farm demonstrated his unwavering perseverance and his willingness to invest significant effort into his endeavors.

Honesty and Integrity: Jonas Lee was revered for his sterling honesty. His actions consistently aligned with his words, and he became a role model for integrity within the community.

Regardless of the challenges he faced, he remained steadfast in his principles, a testament to his unwavering moral character.

Conclusion:

Jonas Lee, a man of extraordinary character and eccentricity, left an indelible mark on his community. His remarkable physical abilities, coupled with his unconventional preaching style, made him a memorable figure. His dedication to building Thorsden Chapel and Jerusalem Farm showcased his unwavering perseverance and commitment. Although circumstances compelled him to leave his cherished mountain home, his legacy as an honest and principled individual lives on. Jonas Lee continues to inspire generations with his remarkable achievements and his enduring spirit.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Lancashire Cheese the best in the world

Once upon a time, in the picturesque county of Lancashire, nestled amidst rolling green hills and fertile pastures, there was a small dairy farm. The farm belonged to the humble Thompson family, who had been tending to their land and cattle for generations.

Mrs. Thompson, a kind-hearted and hardworking woman, possessed a special skill. She was a master in the art of cheesemaking. Every day, as the cows were milked, she collected the surplus milk, never letting a single drop go to waste. The Thompsons' small farm couldn't yield enough milk in a single day to make a full cheese, so Mrs. Thompson devised a clever method.

She curdled each day's milk and accumulated the curds for several days until there was enough to create a cheese. It was a labor of love, patience, and dedication. But the resulting cheese was something truly extraordinary—Lancashire cheese, renowned for its distinctive character.

Unlike any other British cheese, Lancashire cheese had a secret. Two or three days' curds, each with varying degrees of maturity, were blended together. This unique blend gave Lancashire cheese its unmatched flavor and texture.

The fame of Mrs. Thompson's Lancashire cheese spread throughout the county. People from far and wide flocked to the Thompson farm, eager to taste the delectable creation. They marveled at the creamy Lancashire cheese, which had been made using the traditional method passed down through generations.

News of Lancashire cheese reached the ears of a certain Joseph Gornall, a county council employee with a passion for cheese. Intrigued by the renowned Thompson cheese, Joseph set out on a journey across Lancashire, visiting farms and studying their cheesemaking methods. After countless visits and extensive research, Joseph Gornall, of Garstang and Pilling, devised a standardized method for Lancashire cheese, which would become known as the "Gornall method." It was a momentous achievement that would forever shape the future of cheesemaking in Lancashire.

With the newfound knowledge, Mrs. Thompson and other farmers in Lancashire refined their craft, ensuring that the tradition of Lancashire cheese would live on. Joseph Gornall even invented a special device, the "Gornall Patent Cheesemaker," to assist farmers in their cheesemaking endeavors.

Years passed, and the Thompson farm continued to thrive. Creamy Lancashire cheese, made with love and the time-honored techniques, matured for four to twelve weeks, filling the air with its tantalizing aroma. The cheese had a fluffy texture and a creamy flavor that delighted all who tasted it.

The fame of Lancashire cheese spread far beyond the borders of Lancashire itself. It became a symbol of the county's rich agricultural heritage and the hard work of its dedicated farmers.

Today, Lancashire cheese remains a beloved delicacy, cherished by cheese connoisseurs around the world. Its heritage is preserved in every bite, a testament to the wisdom and passion of those who came before. And in the Thompson farm, the tradition lives on, with Mrs. Thompson's descendants continuing to produce the finest Lancashire cheese, honoring their family legacy and the county they call home.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Lancashire Superstitions passed from days of old.

In Lancashire's land of tales and lore, Where customs old are cherished evermore, A tapestry woven with beliefs untold, Superstitions passed from days of old.
A flame that flickers in the hearth's embrace, Determines life's length, a fiery grace. Bright and bold, a sign of years ahead, While dim and faint, a fate to dread.
The poker stirs the embers, sparks arise, Testing love's humor, a lover's guise. Blazing fire, a good-humored heart, A dull glow, a love torn apart.
Crooked sixpence and coins with holes, Lucky charms to ward off woe's tolls. Fortune's favor, they are believed to bring, A pocketful of luck, a hopeful fling.
Beware the Friday's and Sunday's bane, No nails to trim, no fortune to gain. Unlucky deeds, in days divine, A superstitious warning, a cautious sign.
When ears do burn, with heat ablaze, Praises or curses in whispered haze. Left side praised, right side defamed, Words unspoken, by flames unnamed.
Backwards steps, a path of fate, A warning to children, not too late. Misfortune looms for those who dare, To walk askance, a future unfair.
A horseshoe's magic, a witch's bane, Behind doors, protection to attain. Hagstone's key, tied with sacred thread, Horses guarded, nightmares shed.
The churn's charm, a hot iron's might, Expelling witches, banishing their blight. Baker's dough marked with cross's grace, Protection sought in every case.
Warts banished by a snail so black, Rubbed gently, then on hawthorn's track. Pebbles tossed, a transfer of pain, To those who chance upon the bag's disdain.
Black snails seized, by their very horn, A guarantee of fortune, a luck reborn. Tossed with hope, their magic bestowed, Fortunate winds, on life's path they rode.
Bleeding halted, with words unknown, A secret charm by those who've shown, Mystic power to stop life's red flow, A whispered cure, a mystic tableau.
Bewitching curses, passed with breath, Transferred from one to another, in death. A tale of secrets and dark desires, Mysterious forces, tangled in ancestral spires.
Cramp's defeat, a simple trick, Toes peeking from covers, warding off the prick. Garters tied, on the left leg's embrace, Superstitions protect, aches they chase.
Charmed rings and belts, remedies sought, Against dyspepsia and rheumatism's plot. Worn with hope, their enchantment holds, A promise of relief, as destiny unfolds.
Red-haired first, on New Year's Day, Ill-luck they bring, or so they say. Black-haired rewarded, with mirth and cheer, Bringing in the new year, a joyful frontier.
New Year's Eve, a fire's test, Burning through the night, to ward off unrest. A coal or candle, shared in kind, Misfortune bestowed, a tie that binds.
In Lancashire's embrace, these customs abide, A tapestry of beliefs, woven with pride.
Folklore's whispers, passed from the past, In rituals and tales, their legacy will last.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Lancaster Bomber Barnoldswick,

In the small town of Barnoldswick, nestled near Rolls Royce's Bank field factory and surrounded by the picturesque landscapes of Craven, a strange phenomenon began to capture the attention of its residents. A haunting manifestation, as some would describe it, was about to unfold, leaving an indelible mark on the minds of those who witnessed it. It all started with whispers, rumours that a ghostly aircraft was soaring through the sky, reminiscent of the legendary Lancaster Bombers that had once filled the air during the Second World War. At first, the tales seemed unbelievable, dismissed as mere figments of overactive imaginations. But as the stories multiplied, and more witnesses came forward, the presence of the spectral aircraft became undeniable.

Throughout the course of a month, approximately thirty individuals claimed to have seen the silent, grey-colored bomber drifting through the heavens. Their accounts were isolated, each person experiencing the apparition independently, yet their descriptions aligned with eerie precision. The ethereal aircraft seemed to materialize out of thin air, its ghostly form soaring effortlessly across the sky, leaving no sound or trail in its wake. Word of the sightings spread like wildfire, igniting curiosity and fascination among the townsfolk. Some viewed the Lancaster Bomber as a symbol of courage and heroism, reminiscent of the sacrifices made by their ancestors during the war. Others felt a sense of unease, believing that the manifestation held a deeper, more mysterious meaning. As the number of witnesses grew, an impromptu gathering was organized in an attempt to make sense of the supernatural phenomenon. Residents gathered in the town square, their eyes collectively scanning the horizon, hoping to catch a glimpse of the ghostly bomber. Children sat on their parents' shoulders, their innocent gazes filled with wonder and excitement.

The atmosphere was electric, a blend of anticipation and trepidation. Suddenly, a murmur arose from the crowd as a flicker of movement caught their attention. Heads turned upward, and a hush fell over the assembled onlookers. There it was—the Lancaster Bomber, ethereal and majestic, gliding through the heavens with an otherworldly grace.

Gasps of awe escaped the lips of the witnesses, their eyes fixated on the ghostly aircraft as it traversed the sky. It was a surreal sight, as if the past had momentarily merged with the present, reminding everyone of the town's historical significance and the collective memories that bound them together.

As the Lancaster Bomber faded into the distance, its apparition gradually dissolving, the crowd erupted into applause. They were left with a sense of awe and gratitude, for they had witnessed something truly extraordinary—a fleeting glimpse of the past and a reminder of the sacrifices made by those who came before them.

In the days that followed, the sightings of the ghostly aircraft gradually diminished, leaving the residents of Barnoldswick with a profound sense of wonder. The story of the Lancaster Bomber became a part of the town's folklore, passed down from generation to generation, a testament to the enduring power of memory and the unbreakable spirit of a community united by its past.

Though the ghostly visits ceased, the legacy of the haunting manifestation lived on. Barnoldswick became known as a place touched by history, where the echoes of the past sometimes danced upon the wind, reminding all who lived there of the sacrifices and triumphs of those who came before them. And in the hearts of the townsfolk, the memory of the silent, grey Lancaster Bomber would forever remain, a symbol of courage, resilience, and the enduring power of the human spirit.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Legends spoke of the annual pilgrimage the monks made from Kirkstall across the moors over Bouldsworth

In a secluded corner of the countryside, nestled among the meandering streams and lush greenery, stood the remnants of an ancient mill. Its weathered stones, worn down by the passage of time, whispered tales of a bygone era.

As the moonlight bathed the ruins in a silvery glow, the spirits of the past seemed to come alive. Shadows danced upon the crumbling walls, evoking the memory of a once-thriving hub of activity. The old mill, with its square structure and open top, had once been a vital cog in the wheel of Saxon life. It was here that cereal products were ground, providing sustenance for the people.

But as the Normans arrived in the land, seeking to make their mark, the simple sheds gave way to sturdier buildings. The feudal soke mills emerged, and their remnants were scattered across the countryside, including this very spot. A rustic bridge at Netherwood marked the entry point to this enchanting place.

Leaving the footpath to the left, one would follow the course of the stream that flowed from the "Hagg," a place of mystery and natural beauty. A serpentine path led to a breathtaking sight—a miniature peninsula formed by the bend of the river. Rising above the riverbed, the promontory stood proud, its height reaching about 60 or 70 feet.

Upon reaching the top, two green mounds adorned with clusters of thorns greeted the visitors. These hillocks served as the termini of the old mill race, an ancient watercourse that powered the mill's wheels. Beneath the surface, hidden within the gentle slopes below, lay the remnants of the once-mighty mill.

Though time had eroded its physical presence, the mill's history lived on through whispered tales passed down through generations. According to local tradition, this mill had once belonged to the monks of Kirkstall Abbey during their ownership of Monk Hall.

Legends spoke of the annual pilgrimage the monks made from Kirkstall across the moors over Bouldsworth to Extwistle. Along the way, they would pause to preach the gospel to the farmers and shepherds of the surrounding countryside, perched atop the "Abbot Stones," a group of gritty rocks on the northern end of Bouldsworth.

The journey of the monks, carrying the light of their faith through the rugged moorlands, had been a symbol of devotion and resilience. And the mill, a testament to their industrious spirit, had served as a beacon of sustenance for the community.

Now, the old mill stood as a relic of the past, an echo of forgotten times. Visitors who ventured to its ruins could feel the weight of history, the stories of those who had toiled and lived within its walls. The whispers of the wind carried their voices, and the moonlit nights bore witness to their faded glory.

The old mill, with its crumbling stones and moss-covered walls, held the secrets of a bygone era. And as long as its ruins remained, it would continue to be a place where the forms of ages long gone could be felt, and the echoes of the past could still be heard among the rustling leaves and flowing streams.

By Donald Jay.

The Randon Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Molly

Bacup Flowers public house

In the quaint town of Bacup, nestled in the heart of Lancashire, there stood an old and charming establishment known as the Flowers public house. It had been a gathering place for locals for generations, with its warm atmosphere, hearty meals, and friendly staff. But beneath the cheerful facade lay a tale of ghostly encounters that had intrigued both visitors and residents alike.

The pub had gained a reputation for being haunted, with whispers of spectral apparitions and eerie occurrences. Rumors spread like wildfire, and the stories reached the ears of the Paranormal Activity Research Team of Lancashire. Intrigued by the reports, they decided to investigate the claims and delve into the mysteries that surrounded the Flowers public house. Armed with their equipment and a healthy dose of skepticism, the team set foot inside the pub. The atmosphere was lively, with laughter and conversation echoing through the air. The patrons seemed oblivious to the supernatural tales whispered in hushed tones. The team approached the bar and introduced themselves to the friendly landlord, Mr. Johnson, who was more than willing to share his experiences.

Mr. Johnson, a middle-aged man with kind eyes, recounted the tale of Molly, the pub's most famous ghost. He explained how Molly's presence had been felt along the corridor leading to the toilets. Patrons had reported a cold draft, peculiar footsteps, and a sensation of being watched.

Some even claimed to have seen a shadowy figure passing through the dimly lit corridor.

With their curiosity piqued, the paranormal investigators ventured down the corridor, their senses heightened in anticipation. As they reached the spot where Molly's presence was most commonly felt, their equipment began to flicker and beep, indicating a change in the electromagnetic field. Excitement tingled in the air as the team knew they were on the verge of a significant discovery.

Suddenly, a chill descended upon the investigators, causing them to shiver involuntarily. In the faint glow of their flashlights, they caught a glimpse of a woman standing at the end of the corridor. She was dressed in an old-fashioned gown, her face serene and ethereal. Molly had revealed herself.

A hush fell over the team as they observed the ghostly figure. They could feel the weight of her presence, the residual energy of a life once lived. Molly seemed to emanate a sense of longing and sadness, as if she yearned for something or someone beyond the realm of the living.

As the investigators continued their exploration, they encountered other spirits within the pub's walls. An elderly man with a limp made his presence known, appearing near the fireplace in the main room. His gentle smile and distant gaze hinted at a lifetime of memories etched within the pub's history. The team learned that he had been a regular patron in his days and had passed away peacefully within the pub's walls.

Another presence made itself known—a little girl who had succumbed to scarlet fever many years ago. She appeared in the upstairs area, her innocent laughter echoing in the empty rooms. The team could almost feel the sorrow and tragedy that had cut her young life short.

As their investigation drew to a close, the Paranormal Activity Research Team of Lancashire marveled at the layers of history and emotion held within the walls of the Flowers public house. They had witnessed firsthand the lingering spirits, trapped between the realms of the living and the dead.

Word of their findings spread throughout the town, drawing even more curious souls to the pub. The Flowers public house became a destination for those seeking a glimpse into the supernatural, as well as a place for reflection and remembrance. Locals embraced the spirits as part of their community, leaving flowers and tokens of respect in the spots where Molly, the elderly man,

and the little girl had been encountered.

And so, the Flowers public house continued to thrive, not just as a gathering place for living souls, but also as a sanctuary where the stories of the departed could be shared and remembered. The spirits of Molly, the elderly man, and the little girl found solace in the living's acknowledgment, forever entwined with the pub's history—a testament to the enduring power of memory and the enduring connection between the worlds of the living and the dead.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Moving Elevator Location Birkdale Palace Hotel (no longer standing)

In the quaint town of Birkdale, there once stood a majestic structure known as the Palace Hotel. Its grandeur attracted visitors from far and wide, offering luxurious accommodations and a sense of opulence. However, within the elegant facade of the hotel, a haunting manifestation resided, a tale that would be whispered through the ages. It was April 1969, a time when the Palace Hotel had fallen into disrepair. Plans for its demolition were underway, and workers diligently toiled to dismantle the once-vibrant establishment. Yet, as they ventured deeper into the heart of the building, they would soon discover that they were not alone.

The most peculiar occurrences took place within the ageing elevator that served as a relic of the hotel's former glory. The lift seemed to possess a life of its own, moving without warning or refusing to budge when commanded. The perplexed workers found themselves at the mercy of this mischievous contraption, bewildered by its behaviour. As rumours spread, the spectral presence haunting the elevator became the subject of intense speculation. The local townsfolk believed that the ghostly figure was none other than the hotel's original architect, a man whose name was lost to time. Legend had it that he had met a tragic fate, ending his own life by leaping from the rooftop after realizing that the grand hotel had been built facing the wrong direction.

It was said that the architect's tormented spirit clung to the hotel, unable to rest in peace until the mistake was rectified. The spectral entity, trapped within the confines of the Palace Hotel, continued to make its presence known, even as the demolition plans progressed.

Witnesses spoke of strange occurrences, doors slamming shut, inexplicable drafts of icy air, and whispers echoing through the desolate corridors. But it was the elevator that remained the primary stage for the ghost's eerie performances. Workers would step inside, their hearts racing as the lift would ascend or descend without prompting. Some claimed to have glimpsed a fleeting figure in the mirrors, a shadowy spectre that disappeared as quickly as it had appeared.

Despite the growing unease, the workers pressed on, determined to complete their task despite the supernatural obstacles they faced. They cut the power to the entire building, yet the elevator continued to move, as if propelled by an otherworldly force. It seemed that even in death, the architect's determination to rectify his mistake held firm.

The tale of the Palace Hotel and its haunted elevator would linger in the memories of the townsfolk long after the building's demise. The hotel may have been reduced to rubble, but the spirit of the architect, forever tied to the building he had designed, would continue to wander the grounds, forever seeking solace.

Decades later, as new structures stood in place of the Palace Hotel, locals and visitors alike would share the story of the ghostly elevator, a reminder of a bygone era and the legacy of an architect whose tragic fate forever intertwined with the grandeur and misfortune of the Birkdale Palace Hotel.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Mystery of where 'Owd Mary Monk' of Padiham was buried.

The mystery of Owd Mary Monk's burial intrigued the residents of Padiham, a small town nestled in the heart of Lancashire, England. As the locals delved into the history of this enigmatic figure, they discovered tantalizing fragments of her life, piecing together a narrative that seemed to defy conventional expectations.

Owd Mary Monk, formerly known as Mary Whitehead, was born and raised in Padiham in the year 1823. She grew up amidst the backdrop of a bustling industrial landscape, surrounded by the cotton mills that defined the region. In 1844, she married John Monk, a contractor from Great Harwood, and they embarked on a life together.

The couple had three children, two sons, Whitehead and George, and a daughter named Nancy. Whitehead Monk bore his mother's maiden name, a customary practice of the time. Nancy, on the other hand, married William Shaw in 1877 at the Burnley register office, beginning a new chapter in her own story.

As time marched forward, Owd Mary Monk became a familiar presence in the community. She was known for her resilience and unwavering spirit, weathering the challenges of life with an indomitable resolve. Her existence, however, seemed to leave behind an air of intrigue, a touch of the unknown that captured the imagination of those who came across her name.

In 1903, Owd Mary Monk passed away, marking the end of an era. But as the townsfolk sought to pay their respects and bid farewell to this beloved figure, they encountered an unexpected conundrum. None of the usual burial grounds yielded any trace of Owd Mary's final resting place.

The town's church cemetery, located on Blackburn Road, did not hold her mortal remains. Neither did the municipal cemetery on St John's Road in Padiham or the Burnley cemetery. The search for her burial site led them down a labyrinthine path, filled with speculation and conjecture.

One possibility emerged, casting a flicker of light on the mystery. It was suggested that Owd Mary Monk might have found her eternal repose in a private chapel or church, far from the town's familiar graveyards. Among the contenders, St James's churchyard at Altham stood out as a strong candidate.

With renewed determination, the community set out to explore this lead. They combed through old records, meticulously scrutinizing faded documents and maps, searching for any clue that might bring them closer to Owd Mary's burial site. Local historians and genealogists joined forces, driven by a shared desire to unravel this enigma.

Days turned into weeks, and weeks into months, but their tenacity eventually bore fruit. Buried deep within the archives, a long-forgotten entry revealed the truth they sought. Owd Mary Monk had indeed found her final resting place in St James's churchyard at Altham, far from the town that had known her so well.

As the news spread, a mix of relief and satisfaction washed over the community. They had solved the mystery that had tantalized them for years, finally providing closure to the story of Owd Mary Monk. Her grave became a pilgrimage site for locals, a place to pay homage to a woman whose life had captured their collective imagination.

In the end, the mystery of where 'Owd Mary Monk' was buried had become an integral part of Padiham's folklore. It spoke of the enduring power of human curiosity and the unwavering dedication of a community determined to uncover the truth. Owd Mary Monk may have faded into the annals of history, but her story, forever etched in the hearts of the townspeople, continued to inspire and intrigue for generations to come.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

NAMES OF LOCAL PLACES AND THEIR DERIVATIONS

In ancient maps of yore, I find delight, Names of local places, a linguistic flight. They tell tales of origins, histories unknown, Etymological treasures, now to be shown.
Thorsdean Valley, where a stream does flow, Named "Don," from Aryan tongues it does glow. Derived from Sanskrit, a word for water pure, Don, the river's name, an enduring allure.
Armstrong speaks of Gaelic, a language of old, Don, they say, meant water, as legends unfold. Armorican echoes in Brittany's embrace, Retaining the word, a linguistic chase.
The Don in Yorkshire, the Dean close by, The Dun in Lincolnshire, rivers standing high. Throughout Britain, these names do persist, Water's legacy, by ancient tongues kissed.
In Extwistle, a place with tales to tell, "Rogerham," a name that history compels. Roger, the feudal lord, with his noble might, Hamlet, a humble home, in his rightful sight.
Hell Scarr, a rugged wall, a sight to behold, From Saxon "Heil," holy, a story yet untold. Scarr, a rock in Danish, nature's grand decree, "Holy Rock" it proclaims, from hill to sea.
Hell Clough, a defile, branching out with pride, From the same source, its meaning does abide. "Holy Clough," it whispers, through ages gone, A sacred place, where nature's hymns are sung.
Extwistle, an enclosure, where oaks did grow, "Ac" in Saxon, "twistle" the Danes did bestow. Oaks' embrace, a sanctuary profound, A woodland haven, where peace is found.
Swindean, Sweyn's valley, a Danish trace, Owner's name revered, in history's embrace. "Sweyndeane" it echoes, through time and space, A testament to heritage, with dignity and grace.
Runclehurst, a place where density resides, From Saxon "Ronk," where growth confides. Hurst, a wood so thick, in Anglo-Saxon tongue, A verdant realm, where nature's chorus is sung.
Monk Hall, a dwelling for Kirkstall's monks fair, Ownership proclaimed, a heritage to share. Their presence lingers, within its sturdy walls, A testament to faith, where devotion enthalls.
"The Hagg," a place encircled, fenced and true, From Saxon "Hagga," a haven to pursue. Within its bounds, secrets lie in wait, A sheltered realm, where mysteries abate.
Netherwood, a woodland low and serene, Saxon "Nedr," Dutch "Neder," a tranquil scene. Lowerwood it beckons, with whispers of calm, Where nature's embrace extends a healing balm.
Law Carr, a hill adorned with iron's hue, Saxon "Hlaw," a summit that comes in view. Carr, a stream with red oxide's stain, A tribute to nature, in East-Lancashire's domain.
These ancient records, musty and old, Unveil the tides of migration, stories untold. Gaelic, Cymric, Roman, Saxon's reign, Danish and Norman, their linguistic refrain.
Names of local places, echoes of the past, Embedded in landscapes, memories that last. They speak of heritage, in language's embrace, Connecting us to the tapestry of human grace.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jorrtings of Donald Jay from Nelson Lancashire.

Once upon a time in Nelson, Lancashire, there lived a plumber named Peter. He was well-known in the town for his skills and dedication to his work. One fateful day, Peter found himself facing an unusual task that would forever change his life.

It started with a tragic accident involving a BCN bus driver. The driver had met a gruesome end when his bus collided head-on with a wagon. The incident shocked the entire community, and the bus company was determined to handle the aftermath as swiftly as possible.

Due to the driver's Pakistani heritage, his family wished to send his body back to Pakistan for a proper burial. However, there was a catch. The body had to be sealed in a lead-lined coffin and stamped with a customs seal to comply with the necessary regulations.

Word spread about the unique job requirement, and it eventually reached Peter's ears. Always up for a challenge, he volunteered to take on the task. Little did he know what awaited him.

Arriving at the funeral home, Peter was shown to the room where the body lay. He took a deep breath and approached the open coffin. The sight before him was both eerie and unsettling—a headless body peacefully resting, waiting for its final journey.

Peter began his work, meticulously sealing the coffin with lead. The room was filled with an air of solemnity as he focused on the task at hand. But suddenly, as if driven by an otherworldly force, the headless body sat up in the coffin.

The plumber's heart skipped a beat as he turned around, only to witness the unimaginable. The headless corpse appeared to rise from its resting place, defying the laws of nature. Overwhelmed by shock and fear, Peter's legs gave way, and he fainted right then and there.

In the midst of his unconsciousness, a most unfortunate accident occurred. As his body relaxed, Peter involuntarily soiled his pants, adding an unintended consequence to the already bizarre situation.

Time passed, and eventually, Peter regained consciousness. He found himself lying on the floor, surrounded by concerned onlookers. The realization of what had transpired flooded back, and he felt both embarrassed and relieved to be conscious once again.

News of the plumber's fainting spell and the subsequent mishap quickly spread through the town.

It became a subject of gossip and laughter among the locals, who retold the story with exaggeration and humor.

Though initially embarrassed, Peter eventually learned to laugh at himself, realizing that sometimes life presents us with situations that are simply too strange and unexpected to handle. He continued his plumbing work, and whenever he faced a challenging task, he would remember that fateful day and find the strength to persevere.

And so, the story of the Nelson Lancashire plumber who sealed the headless body in a lead-lined coffin became a legend in its own right. It served as a reminder to the townspeople that life's peculiarities can be the source of both discomfort and amusement, but ultimately, it's our ability to find humor in the face of adversity that allows us to keep moving forward.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Sacred Hearts Church, Colne, Lancashire, UK.

Nestled within the heart of Colne stood the majestic Sacred Hearts Church, an ancient structure that exuded an air of mystery and intrigue. Its towering spires reached towards the heavens, casting long shadows over the cobblestone streets below. The townsfolk spoke of strange happenings and eerie sightings that were said to occur within the church's hallowed halls, drawing the curious and the brave to uncover the truth behind the paranormal tales.

My auntie Nelly and uncle Fred were no strangers to the supernatural. They had always been fascinated by the unknown, and when they heard of the tales surrounding Sacred Hearts Church, they couldn't resist the allure of investigating it for themselves. Armed with their trusty camera and an insatiable curiosity, they embarked on a journey that would forever alter their perception of reality.

On a cold and misty evening, as the moon hung low in the sky, my auntie Nelly and uncle Fred ventured into the depths of the church. The ancient wooden doors creaked open, as if welcoming them into a world unseen. The flickering candlelight revealed the fading grandeur of the place, with stained-glass windows casting colourful shadows on the pews below.

As they explored the church, whispers echoed through the air, carrying with them an otherworldly chill. Auntie Nelly's breath caught in her throat, and she tugged at uncle Fred's sleeve, her eyes wide with both fear and excitement. They followed the whispers, their steps echoing through the empty space.

In the heart of the church, they discovered a hidden staircase leading down into a crypt. The whispers grew louder, beckoning them further into the unknown. Each step descended deeper into the darkness, their anticipation mingling with trepidation. It felt as though they were being drawn toward an invisible force.

As they reached the bottom of the staircase, a ghostly figure materialized before them. It was a woman, ethereal and pale, dressed in a flowing white gown. Her eyes glowed with a haunting intensity, and her voice trembled as she spoke, recounting a tragic tale of love and betrayal. The spirit revealed herself as Lady Eleanor, a noblewoman who had lived centuries ago. She had been wrongly accused of witchcraft and sentenced to death, her true love, Lord Arthur, powerless to save her. Bound by sorrow and an unfulfilled destiny, Lady Eleanor's spirit had lingered within the depths of the church, forever trapped in a realm between the living and the dead.

Auntie Nelly and uncle Fred listened intently, their hearts heavy with empathy. They felt a connection to Lady Eleanor, a shared sense of injustice that fueled their determination to help her find peace. With their camera in hand, they documented every encounter, capturing glimpses of the spirit world that had remained hidden from human eyes.

Together, they embarked on a quest to uncover the truth surrounding Lady Eleanor's unjust demise. Through old manuscripts and forgotten tales, they pieced together the puzzle of her tragic story, unearthing long-lost evidence that could clear her name. The more they delved into the past, the stronger their bond with Lady Eleanor grew.

With their newfound knowledge, auntie Nelly and uncle Fred returned to Sacred Hearts Church one fateful night. In a solemn ceremony, they revealed the truth to the world, exposing the injustice that had plagued Lady Eleanor's memory. As the words echoed through the church, a brilliant light engulfed the crypt, and Lady Eleanor's spirit began to fade, her countenance serene and at peace.

The townsfolk of Colne marvelled at the events that unfolded, forever changed by the tale of Lady Eleanor. Sacred Hearts Church became a place of reverence, where the lines between the

living and the dead blurred, reminding all who entered of the power of love, redemption, and the enduring nature of the paranormal.

And so, the legend of Sacred Hearts Church in Colne lived on, a testament to the resilience of spirits trapped in the mortal realm and the unwavering determination of those who seek to uncover the truth, even in the face of the supernatural.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Noggarth Cross and Widdup Cross,

In the quiet township of Rogerham, nestled amidst the dreary wilds, two crosses held a special place in the hearts of the locals. The first, known as Noggarth Cross, stood by the roadside near Rogerham Gate. Legends whispered that it had been erected by benevolent monks, marking the spot where the old road diverged towards the moors. It served as a sacred shrine, where weary travelers would kneel and offer prayers for safe journeys through the desolate lands.

Over time, Noggarth Cross had been moved from its original position, but the socket in which it once stood remained untouched. Mr. Henry Jobling, the estate agent of Mr. Parker, had recently taken charge of restoring the cross to its rightful place. Recognizing its historical significance, he issued strict orders for its re-erection on the hallowed ground where it had long stood, guiding and comforting those who ventured into the wilderness.

The second cross, known as Widdup Cross, had its perch on the north side of the Roman road at Widdup Head. Positioned on the highest point of the Pennine Range, it overlooked the majestic Widdup Valley. Widdup Cross, a modest slab of mill grit, rose to a height of about six feet, firmly embedded in a square socket measuring 14 or 15 inches. The shepherd who tended to the sheep on the moors had once gazed upon its stately presence, standing tall for countless centuries.

However, the passage of time had not been kind to Widdup Cross. In recent years, the ancient monument had vanished from its elevated position. Alas, the weight of progress seemed to have fallen upon it, as a vandal's hand, driven by indifference, had likely shattered the once-proud cross. Its fragments had perhaps been callously seized for road repairs, a fate that befell many historic relics in the face of practicality.

The disappearance of Widdup Cross cast a shadow of sorrow upon the hearts of the township's inhabitants. They mourned the loss of yet another precious landmark, a silent witness to the trials and triumphs of their ancestors. The villagers believed that these crosses connected them to a shared past, a tapestry woven by the threads of history.

News of the cross's destruction reached the ears of Mr. Parker, a local landowner with a deep appreciation for heritage. Stirred by a mix of indignation and determination, he called upon the community to join him in a mission to restore Widdup Cross. Together, they would honor the memory of their forebears and preserve the tangible remnants of their story.

Driven by a sense of duty and fueled by a collective passion, the people of Rogerham rallied behind Mr. Parker's noble cause. They scoured the surrounding areas, searching for any remnants of the shattered cross. With unwavering resolve, they pieced together fragments, bit by bit, like a giant jigsaw puzzle resurrecting the past.

Days turned into weeks, and weeks into months, but their dedication never wavered. Inspired by their commitment, stonemasons and artisans lent their expertise, diligently recreating the intricate details that once adorned the cross. Each stroke of their tools infused life into the once-broken pieces, carrying the legacy of Widdup Cross into a new era.

Finally, the day arrived when Widdup Cross stood once again on its lofty perch at Widdup Head.

The villagers gathered around, their faces illuminated with a mixture of triumph and reverence. They beheld the restored cross, a testament to their unwavering spirit and their refusal to let history crumble beneath the weight of progress.

Noggarth Cross and Widdup Cross, united in their resilience, became more than mere monuments.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Nun. in Bebington Poulton Road Haunting Manifestation .

Further Comments: This phantom woman is believed to be a nun killed while travelling back to the nunnery. A driver in 1970 stopped his car when he saw a woman standing in the middle of the road. She vanished.

In the quaint English town of Bebington, nestled along Poulton Road, there was a legend whispered among the locals. It spoke of a haunting manifestation that would send shivers down the spines of those who dared to venture out late at night. This spectral presence was said to be that of a tragic nun, forever trapped in a liminal space between the realms of the living and the dead.

The story behind this ethereal figure traced back to a fateful night in 1970. It was a moonlit evening when a weary driver, returning home from a long day's work, made his way along Poulton Road. As he neared a desolate stretch of the road, he noticed a figure standing motionless in the middle of the street. His curiosity piqued, the driver slowed his car to a halt, his headlights illuminating the mysterious woman.

To his astonishment, the woman appeared to be dressed in the habit of a nun, her face hidden beneath a dark hood. Her ghostly pale visage seemed to glow eerily in the dim light. Startled yet intrigued, the driver watched in disbelief as the figure began to move toward his vehicle. But as she drew closer, the nun's form wavered, like smoke dissipating in the wind, until she vanished entirely before his eyes.

News of this supernatural encounter spread like wildfire throughout Bebington. The tale of the phantom nun haunted the imaginations of the townsfolk, leaving them both fearful and fascinated. Locals began to recount their own encounters, each story contributing to the mystique surrounding the apparition.

Legend had it that the nun was a tragic soul, her life cut short during a perilous journey back to the nunnery. Some speculated that she had been involved in a tragic accident that claimed her life, while others whispered of a malevolent force that had ended her earthly existence.

Regardless of the cause, the nun's spirit seemed forever bound to Poulton Road, eternally reliving her final moments.

As the years passed, the stories of the nun persisted, captivating the imaginations of Bebington's residents. Many a brave soul ventured out at night, hoping to catch a glimpse of the ethereal figure, while others took detours to avoid the haunted stretch of road altogether.

Yet, despite the numerous accounts, nobody could definitively explain the presence of the nun or why her spirit lingered. Some believed her restless soul sought justice, while others thought she was a guardian spirit, protecting travelers from harm. Regardless of the truth, the phantom nun had become an integral part of Bebington's folklore, forever woven into the fabric of the town's history.

To this day, Poulton Road remains a place of intrigue and trepidation. The legend of the nun continues to be passed down through generations, ensuring that the ethereal figure will never be forgotten. Whether it is the product of overactive imaginations or a genuine otherworldly presence, the haunting manifestation serves as a reminder that some mysteries are meant to remain unsolved, and that the realms of the living and the dead may intertwine in ways that defy rational explanation.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

Poem.

Old Bill and Jean.

In the realm of words, where tales are spun, I'll craft a poem under the shining sun. But heed my plea, for a change I'll make, To choose a path less crude, for everyone's sake.

Old Bill and Jean, a pair so dear, Set out on a summer night, free from fear. Jean donned a dress with flowers so bright, While Bill, in his shorts, embraced the light.

Yet fate played a trick on poor old Bill, His testicle, dangling low, caused a thrill. Exposed, it swung with audacious sway, A sight that brought laughter, but no dismay.

But let's shift the focus, change the scene, To celebrate their love in a different sheen. For Bill and Jean, a bond so strong, Their laughter echoed, their hearts danced along.

Amidst the stars that graced the skies, They shared their dreams, beneath moon's eyes. Hand in hand, they strolled the evening's embrace, Content in love, their souls intertwined with grace.

Their story, one of resilience and might, Enduring challenges, keeping love alight. For life's quirks and follies may come their way, But together they'd conquer, come what may.

So let us now salute this couple's tale, With warmth and kindness, our words shall prevail. Old Bill and Jean, a testament to devotion, Embracing life's journey, with unwavering emotion.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Old Fred's Nettle Beer.

Once upon a time in a quaint countryside village, there lived an eccentric old man named Fred. Fred was known for his love of nature and his adventurous spirit. He spent his days foraging in the nearby hedgerows, gathering wild plants and experimenting with different recipes. His latest fascination was home brewing, and he was determined to create a unique and delightful beverage using the most unexpected ingredients.

Fred's recent discovery was the humble nettle. He had read about its potential in a weathered old recipe book and couldn't resist the idea of making nettle beer. The recipe seemed simple enough, and Fred was excited to give it a try. He gathered his tools, donned his protective gear, and set off to harvest the freshest nettle tops he could find.

Armed with thick clothing, rubber gloves, and a determined spirit, Fred ventured into the nettle patch. Despite his precautions, a sneaky nettle managed to find its way up his trouser leg, leaving him with a prickly reminder of his encounter. Undeterred, Fred persevered, carefully plucking only the young nettle tops, avoiding the bitter older leaves.

Back in his cosy farmhouse kitchen, Fred began the brewing process. He boiled the nettle tops with copper finings, stirring occasionally as the fragrant aroma filled the room. After fifteen minutes, he strained the mixture and transferred it into a sterilized plastic bucket.

With the nettle infusion ready, Fred added sugar, lemon juice, and cream of tartar, ensuring everything dissolved completely. He activated the beer yeast and introduced it to the mixture. Excitement brewed within him as he anticipated the transformation of his nettle concoction into a refreshing and fizzy beverage.

Fred covered the bucket and left it undisturbed for three days, allowing the yeast to work its magic. During this time, he couldn't help but check on the progress, gently releasing the pressure from one of the swing-top bottles to ensure it didn't build up too much.

Finally, the day arrived when Fred deemed his nettle beer ready for consumption. He carefully siphoned the liquid into sterilized swing-top bottles, being mindful not to disturb the sediment that had formed at the bottom of the bucket. The bottles, filled with the effervescent brew, sat on a shelf, waiting to be enjoyed.

As the days passed, Fred eagerly anticipated the moment he would taste the fruits of his labour. One week later, unable to contain his excitement any longer, he selected a bottle and opened it with a satisfying hiss. The aroma of the nettle beer filled the air, and Fred poured himself a glass, admiring its slightly cloudy appearance.

With a sense of achievement, Fred took a sip. The nettle beer had a unique flavour, earthy and refreshing, with a hint of sweetness and a zing from the lemon juice. It was a modest brew but carried the charm of home-made goodness. Fred savoured each sip, appreciating the journey he had embarked on, from foraging in the hedgerows to creating this delightful drink.

Word quickly spread through the village about Old Fred's nettle beer. Curious locals flocked to his farmhouse, eager to taste this intriguing creation. They were enchanted by the eccentric old man and his knack for turning simple ingredients into something extraordinary.

Fred's nettle beer became a local favourite, enjoyed at village gatherings, picnics, and even during the harvest festival. The brew became a symbol of community and the beauty of embracing nature's gifts. Fred shared his recipe freely, encouraging others to explore their own brewing adventures and discover the joy of home-made libations.

And so, Old Fred's nettle beer became a legend in the countryside, a reminder that hidden treasures can be found even in the most unlikely places. Fred's passion for nature and his

unwavering spirit brought happiness to the villagers, forever immortalizing him as the eccentric brewer who turned stinging nettles into liquid gold.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

OLD MILES IN THORSDEAN

In the picturesque village of Thorsdean, nestled amidst rolling hills and meandering streams, there once lived a man named Miles. Known affectionately as "Miles o' David's," he resided in a modest shanty near the riverside, just below the gentle slope of "Broad Bonk." Miles was a well-known figure in the local community, and his uncle, "Will i'th' Parlour," resided in nearby Trawden.

Miles was the proprietor of a cozy establishment known as a "whist shop," a term used in East Lancashire to describe a small pub. In addition to running his establishment, Miles took pride in brewing his own beer, which he sold under the old Act by subscribing to Her Majesty's exchequer. He was known for his sharp wit, abundant humor, and his knack for engaging customers with his jovial banter. Miles truly embodied the spirit of a genial host, and his patrons often found themselves leaving his establishment as they arrived—sober and content.

The location of Miles's shanty by the riverside was fortuitous, as the water flowing nearby was pristine and abundant. Perhaps it was the purity of this water or the scarcity of malt that prevented his patrons from succumbing to the excesses of drunkenness, but whatever the reason, Miles's establishment was blessedly spared from the brawls and disturbances that plagued other drinking establishments. This further endeared him to the village folk and garnered him a loyal following.

Miles's charm and hospitality also extended beyond his regular customers. During the sporting season, the moors surrounding Thorsdean would attract gentlemen sportsmen from far and wide. Among them was the venerable General Scarlett, a well-respected figure who often frequented the area. The General and his fellow sportsmen would occasionally seek respite at Miles's whist shop, partaking in the refreshments Miles had to offer.

One vivid memory stands out—a day when the weary shooters returned from a particularly arduous day of sport. General Scarlett, astride his horse, rode up to Miles's shanty and greeted him warmly. "Well, Miles, how are you? We have a group of gentlemen here eager to savor your renowned beer," the General declared with a smile. Ever the obliging host, Miles wasted no time in serving the beer, filling common earthenware pots to the brim. The group of sportsmen settled on the small patch of greensward in front of Miles's door, reveling in the camaraderie, the libations, and the sheer joy of the moment.

Alas, time has a way of transforming even the most cherished memories. Miles has long since departed from this world, leaving behind his legacy in the hearts of those who knew him. The valiant General Scarlett, too, has found his eternal rest in the quiet churchyard of Holmes Chapel.

As for the humble riverside shanty that was once abuzz with the merry chorus of Miles's patrons, it now lies in ruins, devoid of a roof and ailing under the weight of neglect—a poignant reminder of a bygone era.

But while Miles and his shanty may be gone, their memory lingers in the hearts of Thorsdean's inhabitants. The stories of laughter and camaraderie, of refreshing ale shared on sunlit afternoons, continue to be passed down from one generation to the next. And as the village evolves and new faces grace its streets, the spirit of Miles and the cherished times he provided remain woven into the tapestry of Thorsdean's history—a testament to the enduring power of good company and the magic that can be found within the humblest of establishments.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

OLD THIRTEEN TO TH' DOZEN

Harry Stanworth, known as Old Thirteen to th' Dozen, was a notorious poacher who lived in Monk Hall during the residence of the Parkers at Extwistle Hall. Harry's obsession with poaching led him into countless encounters with the law, but his most memorable tale began with a stroke of luck.

One moonlit night, Harry ventured out on his poaching expedition and found extraordinary success. He managed to catch twelve hares, an impressive haul by any standard. But Harry's greed knew no bounds. He couldn't resist the temptation to make it an even thirteen. So, he persevered until he finally achieved his goal.

However, just as Harry was securing his thirteenth hare, the gamekeepers descended upon him, their torches illuminating the darkness. They confiscated the hares and promptly brought him before Mr. Parker, the stern owner of Extwistle Hall. Harry, ruefully contemplating his ill-fated ambition, muttered to himself, "Ther's no luck wi thirteen to th' dozen."

Despite this setback, Harry's poaching days were far from over. On another occasion, he found himself ensnared by the law once again. This time, when he stood before Mr. Parker, the man remarked with a mix of resignation and reproach, "Well, Harry, you've come again."

Harry, acknowledging his guilt, replied humbly, "I am, maister."

Mr. Parker decided to give Harry another chance. He laid out his conditions for the old poacher, a chance for redemption. Harry was to attend Burnley Church every Sunday without fail, with Mr. Parker warning him sternly that any deviation would be met with severe consequences. In return, he would receive a weekly allowance of five shillings, as long as he abandoned poaching and upheld his end of the bargain.

Eager for a fresh start and swayed by the generous terms, Harry agreed to the conditions. Grateful for this unexpected opportunity, he left Extwistle Hall with a sense of hope and determination. As he journeyed home, he couldn't help but feel a profound sense of gratitude towards his forgiving patron, a sentiment that deepened as he clutched the hare Mr. Parker had gifted him.

For a time, Harry remained true to his word. He faithfully attended church every Sunday, resisting the pull of his old ways. The five shillings provided him with a modest but steady income, enough to sustain him and quell the temptation that haunted him.

But alas, the allure of poaching proved too strong. The old instincts that ran through his veins resurfaced, whispering tantalizing promises of adventure and triumph. Harry found himself yearning for just one more night, one more catch.

With his resolve weakened, he set out once more, convinced that he could outsmart the gamekeepers. Yet fate had other plans. Before long, Harry was caught in the act, his nets and snares serving as damning evidence against him. Once again, he found himself standing before Mr. Parker, shame etched across his weathered face.

"It's no use," Harry admitted, his voice tinged with defeat. "I can't help it, it runs i' th' blood. I do like to catch a hare, master. You mun forgive me, and I'll try to do better."

Mr. Parker, his patience tested but not entirely depleted, sighed and looked at the remorseful old man before him. He realized that mere promises held no weight against ingrained habits. With a mixture of disappointment and resignation, he decided against punitive measures and instead issued a cautionary admonition.

"You must understand, Harry," Mr. Parker spoke sternly, "that forgiveness can only go

so far.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Our swings down by the Cat Steps in Nelson

In those days, Nelson was a small town with a tight-knit community. The recreation ground down Carr Road was our haven, where we would spend endless hours immersed in adventure and laughter. As children, we were fearless, oblivious to the dangers that lurked around us. The journey to Woodside Terrace, where the majestic trees stood, was always an exciting one. We would scamper down the cat steps, worn and weathered by countless footsteps over the years. These steps were like a secret passage, leading us to a magical realm where imagination soared.

As we arrived at Woodside Terrace, our eyes would light up with anticipation. The great trees towered above us, their branches reaching out like welcoming arms. They became our playground, offering endless opportunities for swinging, climbing, and exploring. The swings were our favorite, providing a rush of adrenaline as we soared through the air, defying gravity. We would swing so high that we felt like we were touching the clouds, the world beneath us a blur.

From our perch on the swings, we had a breathtaking view. We could gaze across to Victoria Park, a lush green oasis that brought solace to the weary souls. The park was always alive with families picnicking, children running around, and couples strolling hand in hand. It was a place of tranquility, a stark contrast to the excitement of our own little realm.

Turning our heads to the right, we would see the grandeur of Nelson Football Club. The stadium stood tall, its walls echoing with cheers and shouts on match days. We imagined ourselves as star players, scoring goals and winning the hearts of the crowd. The old cricket ground and bowling green were nearby, where seasoned players showcased their skills with finesse and grace.

Time seemed to stand still in those moments of innocent joy. We laughed, we played, and we reveled in the camaraderie that only childhood friendships can offer. The memories we created in that recreation ground became etched in our hearts, a testament to the carefree days of our youth.

Years have passed since then, and life has taken us on different paths. The swings may have long been replaced, and the trees may have grown taller, but the spirit of those childhood adventures lives on within us. Whenever we return to Nelson, we make sure to visit the recreation ground down Carr Road. As we stand on the cat steps, memories come flooding back, and we are transported to a time when swinging from those great trees was the epitome of freedom.

And as we look across to Victoria Park, Nelson Football Club, and the old cricket ground and bowling green, we are reminded of the simple joys we experienced and the unbreakable bonds we formed. The recreation ground may have been a physical place, but its significance goes far beyond that. It represents the resilience, the laughter, and the limitless possibilities that defined our childhood.

As the sun sets over Nelson, casting a warm glow on the memories we hold dear, we realize that no matter how much time passes, the recreation ground down Carr Road will forever be a cherished part of who we are.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Pinhaw Moor.on the Colne to Skipton old back road.

In the peaceful countryside of Pinhaw Moor, there stood a testament to a bygone era. A solitary hut, weathered and worn by the passage of time, perched atop the summit. It was a remnant of an age when the moor served as a Beacon Hill, a vigilant watchtower overlooking the land. The hut bore witness to the dedication and sacrifice of the beacon guards who stood their ground against potential threats.

It was the year 1805, a time when fears of invasion loomed heavy in the hearts of the English people. News had reached Pinhaw Moor that Napoleon Bonaparte, the French Emperor, had set his sights on the English coast. The beacon guards stationed at the hut, led by a steadfast man named Robert Wilson, kept a vigilant eye on the horizon, awaiting any signs of danger.

Winter had settled upon the land, cloaking everything in a pristine white blanket of snow. But as the snowfall intensified, the beacon guards found themselves trapped within the confines of their shelter. Days turned into a seemingly endless barrage of snowflakes, leaving them isolated and cut off from the outside world.

Inside the hut, their supplies dwindled, and hunger gnawed at their stomachs. Robert Wilson, resolute and determined, made a decision. He would brave the treacherous storm and venture across the moor to Moor Side Farm, where provisions awaited. His companions, aware of the peril that awaited him outside, pleaded with him to reconsider, to wait out the storm until help arrived. But Robert's unwavering spirit could not be swayed.

With his bag slung over his shoulder and a milk can in hand, Robert Wilson stepped into the maelstrom of swirling snow. The howling winds threatened to swallow him whole as he forged ahead, leaving behind the warmth and safety of the hut.

Time stretched on, and his fellow guards anxiously awaited his return. The storm raged with unyielding fury, blurring the lines between hope and despair. But as the tempest finally began to relent, Robert's absence weighed heavily on their hearts. Concern turned into fear, and fear into the realization that something had gone terribly wrong.

The men, driven by a mix of worry and determination, made their way through the now tranquil moor to the nearby village. They rallied the villagers, and a search party was quickly organized. With unwavering resolve, they combed the icy landscape, desperate to find their missing comrade.

And then, as if guided by an unseen hand, they stumbled upon a sight that pierced their hearts. In a desolate stretch of land, roughly four hundred yards from the hut, lay the lifeless body of Robert Wilson. His face, frozen in a peaceful repose, bore the marks of an arduous journey and a valiant struggle against the elements.

Grief washed over the search party, mingling with a profound sense of respect for the fallen beacon guard. In honor of his sacrifice, his friends erected a stone at the spot where he had perished. Upon its surface, the words etched deep into the weathered rock served as a reminder of Robert Wilson's unwavering dedication: "Here was found dead the body of Robert Wilson, one of the beacon guards, who died January 29, 1805, aged 59 years."

Time continued its ceaseless march, and the years unfolded like pages in a book. Yet, the stone endured, standing as a silent testament to a man who gave his life in the service of his country. Pinhaw Moor remained serene, its rolling hills and moors bearing witness to the stories of generations past.

To this day, visitors to Pinhaw Moor can still find the weathered stone, standing firm amidst the passage of time. It serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by those who stood guard, their unwavering commitment to the safety and well-being of their fellow countrymen.

And though the snow may fall and the winds may howl, the memory of Robert Wilson and his gallant spirit endures, forever etched in the annals of Pinhaw Moor's history.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Pissing in boots

In the dimly lit tent, a group of soldiers huddled together, preparing for a night's sleep. Among them was Hardcastle, a man who had worked hard to escape the slums, only to find himself surrounded by individuals whose crude manners and violent tendencies disgusted him. The foul language they used nauseated him, but there was one particular practice that he found utterly revolting.

Hardcastle had learned quickly to be vigilant about his possessions, guarding them closely to prevent theft. However, there was another matter that required his attention each night – his boots. He had discovered that some of his comrades had a peculiar habit of relieving themselves in their boots to avoid the inconvenience of visiting the latrine during the night. The thought of it made him shudder with disgust.

At first, Hardcastle believed that this repulsive behavior was limited to only the most debased and crude soldiers. In his mind, it was a reflection of their low character and lack of decency. That perception changed when he came across J.B. Priestley's account in the book "Margin Released."

Priestley, one of the "First Hundred Thousand," had trained alongside Hardcastle. Their unit consisted of a mix of former clerks and seasoned soldiers returning to service.

To Hardcastle's surprise, Priestley revealed that they had also engaged in the practice of pissing in their boots. Priestley further explained that the old soldiers claimed it was beneficial for their boots, making them more comfortable during long marches.

While Priestley had only mentioned pissing in their own boots, it occurred to Hardcastle that perhaps this seemingly outlandish and disgusting act was rooted in an old army custom. It was possible that there was a practical reason behind it. In certain parts of India and other places, leaving the safety of the tent at night could pose serious risks.

As Hardcastle pondered this revelation, he began to see the practice in a different light. While he still found it distasteful, he started to understand that it might have been a survival mechanism born out of necessity. The soldiers, with their experiences and wisdom, may have adapted this habit to protect themselves in hostile environments. While Hardcastle couldn't bring himself to participate in such a practice, his perception of it had shifted. He no longer saw it as a mere display of crude behavior but rather as a reflection of the harsh realities soldiers faced and the ingenuity they employed to ensure their safety.

In time, as he continued his journey alongside his comrades, Hardcastle learned to respect the resilience and resourcefulness of those he initially held in contempt. The bonds forged in the crucible of war transcended backgrounds and transformed him from a fastidious man trying to distance himself from his past into a soldier who understood the complexity and diversity of his fellow warriors.

And so, the story of Hardcastle and his initial disdain for the practice of pissing in boots became a lesson in humility and understanding, reminding him that one's perspective can be reshaped when faced with the realities of life and the shared struggles of those around him.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Poem, A full English

In the realm of morning fare, A feast emerges with utmost flair. Behold the beauty on the plate,
A Full English Breakfast, truly great.

Eggs, oh eggs, with golden yolk, Whisper tales of morning's cloak. Fried or poached, their glory
shines, Nourishing souls with breakfast's signs.

Bacon sizzles, dances in delight, Its aroma swirling, a mouthwatering sight. Crispy, savoy, a
slice of bliss, Embracing taste buds with every kiss.

Sausage, robust and full of cheer, Graces the platter without a fear. Juicy and tender, bursting
with flavour, A hearty delight to forever savour.

Tomatoes, a burst of crimson hue, Adding freshness to this morning view. Tangy sweetness, a
burst of zest, A vibrant touch that truly impress.

Mushrooms, earthy and inviting, Their subtle charm is so exciting. Sautéed to perfection, a
tender bite, Enhancing this breakfast's sheer delight.

Potato cakes and oat cakes too, An ensemble of texture that wows anew. Crisp and fluffy, a
delightful crunch, They elevate this feast with a punch.

Black pudding, rich and bold, An acquired taste, a tale untold. Its deep, dark flavours intertwine,
A blackened jewel that many find divine.

Bread and toast, with butter spread, A canvas for flavours, a morning thread. A comforting
embrace to start the day, With each warm bite, worries melt away.

Jam and marmalade, sweetly applied, A burst of sweetness, cannot be denied. A fruity
symphony, a sugary caress, Spreading joy with each spoonful's finesse.

Tea or coffee, a beverage divine, With warmth and comfort, they intertwine. One's soothing
whispers, the other's bold, They awaken the senses, stories unfold.

A Full English Breakfast, a morning treat, A symphony of flavours, a true retreat. From eggs to
bacon, and all between, A culinary journey, a breakfast dream.

So let us gather, with hearts alight, Embrace this feast, with sheer delight. For in each bite, a
story's told, A Full English Breakfast, a treasure untold.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

PROCTERS OF PROCTER COTE EXTWISTLE.

The Procters of Procter Cote had long been a prominent family in the township of Extwistle. Their ancestral farmhouse, known as Procter Cote, stood proudly near Lee Green, a testament to their enduring presence in the area for over two centuries. Nicholas Procter, the last known member of the family to reside there, was a venerable old man whose memory lingered in the minds of many.

In the years leading up to the fateful Scotch Rebellion of 1715, one of the Procter ancestors, William Procter, held strong Jacobite sympathies. Fueled by his allegiance to the exiled Stuart dynasty, he ventured forth to meet the arriving rebels at Preston. As he made his way through the picturesque village of Whalley, fate intervened in the form of a division of the Royal Army. General Carpenter, commanding a contingent of dragoons, crossed the countryside from Clitheroe to Preston, intercepting William Procter along the road. Fearing arrest and the consequences that would follow, William quickly abandoned his Jacobite leanings and assimilated into the multitude of regular citizens. With a heavy heart, he watched as the Royalist forces made a bold charge up the main street of Preston.

From his vantage point, William managed to avoid the dangers that swirled around him and observed the Rebel leaders, including the noble Lords Derwentwater and Kenmure, being marched down the street as prisoners. The sight etched itself into his memory, a vivid reminder of the perils of political fervor and the fragility of rebellious aspirations.

Returning home to Procter Cote, William could not help but recount his harrowing experience at Preston. Gathering family and friends around him, he regaled them with tales of the charged atmosphere, the clash of ideologies, and the poignant scenes he witnessed. Among his favorite recitals was the singing of the old ballad "Mackintosh and Mar are coming," a rousing ode to the Earl of Mar's raising of the Pretender's standard at Braemar in the Highlands.

As the years passed, the Procter lineage continued its course, adapting to changing times and the shifting currents of history. Eventually, Nicholas Procter, the last known resident of Procter Cote, made the difficult decision to leave the ancestral home behind. Seeking new opportunities and a different way of life, he moved to Burnley Lane Head, bidding farewell to the farmstead that had borne his family's name for generations.

Yet, even as Procter Cote stood silent and empty, its walls whispered tales of the Procter family's unwavering loyalty, their encounters with history, and the echoes of a bygone era. And while their physical presence might have faded, the spirit of the Procters lived on, intertwined with the fabric of Extwistle and forever etched into the annals of local lore.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Ralph's Wife .

In the quaint town of Banks Lancashire, nestled along the rugged coastline, a haunting tale echoed through the ages. It was a story that sent shivers down the spines of the townsfolk, especially during the dark winter nights when the winds howled and the sea roared with an unforgiving fury. This tale revolved around Ralph and his wife, a love story that transcended both time and death.

Ralph was a mysterious man, known to some as a smuggler and to others as a humble fisherman.

His ventures often took him far from the safety of the shore, venturing into treacherous waters. One fateful day, Ralph set sail, promising his wife that he would return before the winter storms arrived. Little did he know that his fate was sealed, as the sea claimed him as one of its own.

Heartbroken by her husband's disappearance, Ralph's wife found solace in the belief that he would someday return. She never lost hope, clinging to the memories they shared and the love that bound them. Determined to guide her lost husband home, she would embark on a spectral journey, forever roaming the desolate path that became known as Ralph's Wife's Lane.

Legend had it that the ghostly manifestation of Ralph's wife could be seen during the darkest nights, her ethereal figure gliding silently from St. Stephens Church to Fiddler's Ferry. Clutching a flickering lantern in her hand, she searched the horizon, its warm glow casting an eerie light upon her ghostly visage. It was said that her sole purpose was to guide Ralph's spirit back to the safety of their home, should he ever find his way back from the watery depths.

As the townsfolk huddled around their fireplaces on those wintry nights, whispers of the haunting apparition circulated. Some claimed to have encountered her, catching glimpses of her translucent figure, clad in a tattered gown, her face etched with a melancholic longing. Others swore they heard her wailing cries carried on the wind, calling out to Ralph, begging him to return to her side.

Through the years, Ralph's Wife's Lane became a place of both fear and fascination. Visitors and locals alike would gather, hoping to catch a glimpse of the forlorn specter, to witness the undying love that bound Ralph and his wife even in death. Some brave souls even ventured to follow her ethereal path, only to find themselves lost in a maze of darkness, their voices swallowed by the haunting whispers of the night.

Generations passed, and the tale of Ralph's wife continued to weave its enchanting spell over the town. The legend became a symbol of eternal love, a reminder that some bonds could not be broken, even by death itself. Each winter, as the winds carried the scent of the sea, the townsfolk would recount the story of Ralph and his devoted wife, ensuring that their love story lived on.

And so, in the lonely hours of the night, when the moon cast its pale light upon Ralph's Wife's Lane, the ghostly figure would continue her ethereal journey. With her lantern guiding the way, she remained an ever-present sentinel, forever searching for her beloved Ralph, forever keeping the flame of their love alive.

For as long as the tale was told, Ralph's wife would walk, her spirit intertwined with the very fabric of the town. And maybe, just maybe, one day Ralph would find his way back to her, guided by the flickering light that led him home.

By Donald Jay

The Randon Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Refusing To Maintain A Mother

In the small town of Briercliffe with Extwistle, nestled within the rolling hills of Lancashire, an unfortunate situation had unfolded. The Burnley Advertiser chronicled the story on a fine Saturday, the 13th of May in 1865.

The court was abuzz with anticipation as Jonas Lee, a servant man at Southfield House, stood accused of refusing to provide for his aging mother, Sarah Lee. Sarah, now old and infirm, found herself reliant on the support of the township, receiving a meager 2s. 6d. a week to sustain herself.

Jonas, a widower, stood before the bench with a weekly income of 16s. It was evident that he had the means to contribute to his mother's welfare, as no dependents relied upon him for support. The proceedings revealed that an order had been issued against Jonas the previous year, mandating his financial responsibility for his mother's care. However, the order had never been served.

Mr. Hartley, representing Jonas, took the floor to defend his client's position. He argued that Jonas had a daughter and grandchild to support, insinuating that his obligations lay elsewhere. But upon further investigation, it became apparent that the daughter had married and her husband, Jonas' son-in-law, resided in Marsden, or perhaps had recently relocated.

The courtroom listened intently, weighing the circumstances and the moral obligations at hand. The bench, composed of wise and compassionate magistrates, deliberated on the matter before reaching a decision.

Recognizing the importance of caring for aging parents, the bench firmly asserted that Jonas Lee had a duty to provide for his mother. They acknowledged his modest income and the presence of his daughter and grandchild but deemed these factors insufficient to absolve him of his responsibilities.

In light of the evidence and the needs of Sarah Lee, the magistrates pronounced their judgment. They issued an order, demanding that Jonas contribute 2s. a week towards his mother's upkeep. It was a modest sum, but one that would alleviate the burden on the township and ensure Sarah's well-being in her final years.

As the gavel fell, the courtroom sighed with a mix of relief and disappointment. The verdict highlighted the societal expectation that individuals must care for their elderly parents, emphasizing the importance of family ties and responsibility.

Sarah Lee left the courtroom with a sense of reassurance, knowing that her son would be compelled to support her. She cherished the hope that their strained relationship might mend over time, buoyed by the court's decision and the prospect of a more stable future.

And so, the tale of Jonas Lee and his mother, Sarah, served as a reminder to all that familial duty should never be neglected. The story became a talking point within the community, sparking conversations about filial piety and the value of intergenerational support. It was a testament to the endurance of tradition and the collective consciousness that guided the hearts and minds of the people of Briercliffe with Extwistle.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Ribblehead navvies .

In the late 19th century, the small community of Ribblehead was bustling with activity as the Settle-Carlisle Railway was being constructed. The air was filled with the sound of hard labor and the scent of alcohol that often accompanied the exhausted navvies after their long shifts. With a majority of the population being young and single men, marital problems were bound to arise in the homes left behind.

The women of Ribblehead bore the brunt of the household responsibilities, taking care of their own children as well as the lodgers who sought shelter in their homes. Living without modern conveniences made their tasks even more challenging, and the strain on marriages became evident. Stories of infidelity and elopement between navvies and married women began to circulate, shedding light on the crumbling relationships within the community.

One such scandal involved William Farrell, who found himself in court for running away with the wife of George Garnett. After absconding with George's purse containing a considerable sum of £20, William and the unfaithful wife had settled in Great Harwood, near Blackburn, where they were eventually apprehended.

However, one of the most sensational cases occurred when William Harding, a railway worker on the Settle-Carlisle line, found himself in dire circumstances. In May 1876, as the railway project neared completion, William had to seek work elsewhere and left his wife, Rachel Harding, with £40, intending to reunite their family once he had made the necessary arrangements. Rachel, at around 48 years old, had been married to William for 25 years and had an astonishing seventeen children, of whom only seven survived.

When William returned after a brief absence, he was greeted by his eldest daughter, who shocked him with her bruised and swollen eyes—a result of her mother's misconduct. Rachel had engaged in an affair with Samuel Cooper, a 27-year-old navvy who had recently lodged with the Harding family. When the daughter confronted her mother, Samuel did not hesitate to strike her. Seizing the opportunity, the couple fled, taking with them their baby, all available money, two watches, clothing, trunks, and bedding.

Distraught, William immediately involved the police, who eventually tracked down the couple in Barrow. Samuel Cooper was arrested and brought to Bradford for a court appearance.

However, the charges against him only pertained to stealing two boxes, a bolster, and a pillow—there was no mention of a wife involved. Since the hearing took place in Bradford, which was not within the jurisdiction where Samuel received those stolen goods, the prosecution team decided against presenting evidence and asking the jury to convict him. As a result, Samuel was acquitted, much to his good fortune.

William Harding, a lifelong railway tunneler from Cheshire, had married Rachael Davis from Carmarthen. Their journey together had taken them to various locations, including Wales, Truro, Cornwall, and Bristol, with children added to their family along the way. The baby Rachel had taken with her was Arthur Walter Harding, who was baptized at St Leonard's in Chapel-le-Dale on June 3, 1874. In all subsequent census records, Alfred Walter described his birthplace as "Jericho," referring to the shanty town where he was born. Unfortunately, there are no further records available for Rachel, Harding, or Cooper. William, now described as a widower, resided on the moors above Oldham with his four children, including the youngest, Arthur Walter, who was often listed as "out of work" in the census returns.

Amidst the marital turmoil that plagued Ribblehead, another tragic incident unfolded. Thomas Cook, a 30-year-old platelayer working on the railway in Carlisle, reached a breaking point in his married life. Unable to bear the strain any longer, he decided to take his own life, leaving

behind a chalk message on a nearby wall. The message served as a warning to all young men: "I take the pleasure of writing these few lines, if it will be a warning to all young men never to live with a mother-in-law. Now I end my miserable existence."

The marital problems of Ribbleshead's navvies were a reflection of the harsh conditions and hardships faced by both men and women during that era. The temptations and struggles of the railway construction project brought about heartbreak, scandal, and sometimes even tragedy, leaving a lasting impact on the community.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

Rising Sea Levels Threaten Lancashire Areas by 2050.

Once upon a time in Lancashire, there lived a quirky character named Sam. Sam was a peculiar fellow with a knack for adventure, always seeking out the most unusual and unlikely endeavors. One day, while browsing through the news, Sam stumbled upon a rather alarming headline: "Rising Sea Levels Threaten Lancashire Areas by 2050."

Now, most people would be concerned or worried about such news, but not Sam. No, Sam saw it as an opportunity for a grand and daring escapade. With a mischievous grin on his face, he declared, "I shall swim to Blackpool before it vanishes!"

Undeterred by the long-distance and potential dangers, Sam embarked on his aquatic journey. He packed his swimming goggles, a rubber duck floaty, and a waterproof map. With a determined stroke, he dove into the water and began his marathon swim.

Day after day, Sam tirelessly swam towards Blackpool. He encountered curious fish, playful dolphins, and even a puzzled seagull who couldn't quite comprehend why a human would choose to swim such a long distance. Sam persevered, driven by his own brand of determination and silliness.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity, Sam reached the outskirts of Blackpool. But to his dismay, the town was already flooded! The rising sea levels had taken over, transforming it into an underwater amusement park. Instead of roller coasters and candy floss, there were now schools of fish and submerged buildings.

Undeterred by this setback, Sam put on his snorkel gear and explored the underwater Blackpool. He swam past the sunken Pleasure Beach, waved at the fish gliding through the ghostly remains of the Blackpool Zoo, and even found an abandoned roller coaster that had become a makeshift coral reef.

After a day of underwater exploration, Sam realized that his mission was complete, and it was time to head back to his hometown of Bury. He bid farewell to the underwater wonders of Blackpool and started swimming in the opposite direction.

Upon his return to Bury, Sam was greeted with puzzled looks from the locals. They couldn't quite fathom why someone would swim to Blackpool only to swim back again. Sam simply shrugged and replied, "Well, I wanted to see it before it disappeared, didn't I? Even if it meant swimming twice!"

And so, Sam's absurd and entertaining adventure became the talk of the town. People couldn't help but chuckle at his unconventional approach to life. From that day forward, whenever someone mentioned rising sea levels or the disappearing Lancashire coast, the story of Sam's double swim to Blackpool was shared with laughter and amusement.

And as for Sam, he continued to seek out the most peculiar and lighthearted adventures, reminding everyone that even in the face of serious issues, a dash of humor can make the journey worthwhile.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Robert Bacup - Royal Court Theatre Haunting Manifestation

Robert had always been fascinated by the supernatural. The mere mention of ghosts and hauntings sent a thrill down his spine. So when he heard about the Royal Court Theatre in Bacup, known for its haunting manifestations, he couldn't resist the opportunity to investigate it himself.

Armed with his ghost-hunting equipment and a heart full of excitement, Robert arrived at the theater one gloomy evening. The air was heavy with anticipation as he stepped through the grand entrance, feeling a strange energy envelop him. He was determined to uncover the mysteries that lay within these walls.

Robert began his exploration in the Circles seating area, where the Paranormal Activity Research Team of Lancashire had detected the presence of a woman named Kitty and a man named Jackson. As he carefully set up his equipment, he couldn't help but wonder about the stories behind these apparitions. Were they former actors or patrons who had left a lasting imprint on the theater?

Hours passed, and Robert's patience was rewarded when he felt a sudden drop in temperature and heard faint whispers in the air. He quickly switched on his digital voice recorder, eager to capture any paranormal activity. To his amazement, the disembodied voices of Kitty and Jackson filled the recording, as if they were reliving their past conversations. It sent shivers down his spine, but it also fueled his determination to delve deeper.

Moving to the reception area, Robert encountered the presence of a doctor-like figure. The energy in the room changed, becoming heavy and foreboding. Shadows danced along the walls, and Robert's equipment went haywire, confirming the supernatural presence. The doctor seemed to linger, perhaps trapped between realms, and Robert couldn't help but wonder about the unresolved story that tied this spirit to the theater.

As the night wore on, Robert ventured further into the building, encountering other unexplained phenomena. Doors creaked open and shut on their own, objects moved mysteriously, and he even caught glimpses of ethereal figures darting through the corridors. It was a truly surreal experience that both exhilarated and frightened him. But amidst the eerie encounters, Robert couldn't help but feel a sense of reverence for the spirits that inhabited the theater. They were a part of its history, woven into its very fabric. He wanted to understand their stories, to give them a voice beyond the ethereal whispers and fleeting apparitions.

Days turned into weeks, and Robert tirelessly researched the theater's past. He discovered that a tragic love story had unfolded within these walls, involving Kitty, Jackson, and the doctor-like figure. The details were hazy, but it seemed that their intertwined fates had left a lasting imprint on the Royal Court Theatre.

Driven by his findings, Robert organized a public event at the theater, sharing his evidence and stories with an eager audience. It was a night of fascination and curiosity, where skeptics became believers, and believers were enthralled by the depth of the haunting manifestations.

Through his research and dedication, Robert brought the stories of Kitty, Jackson, and the doctor-like figure to light, turning the Royal Court Theatre into a place not only known for its ghostly presence but also for the rich history and tragic tales that unfolded within its walls.

From that day forward, the theater became a pilgrimage site for those seeking to connect with the supernatural. People flocked to witness the paranormal activity, and the spirits that once remained hidden found solace in the acknowledgment of their existence.

Robert's investigation had not only uncovered the haunting manifestations but had also

breathed new life into the theater itself. The Royal Court Theatre became a beacon for the curious, a place where the past mingled with the present, and where the spirits found peace in sharing their stories with those willing to listen.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Roger Nowell High Sheriff of Lancashire, a wicked man who betrayed the innocent.

Once upon a time in the quaint village of Read, Lancashire, there lived a man named Roger Nowell. Born into a respected family, Roger was the son of Roger Nowell and Florence Atkinson, and he carried the family's legacy with pride.

As Roger grew older, he formed a close bond with his presumed brother, John Nowell. Their companionship was evident when John stood witness at Roger's marriage in 1581, marking the beginning of a new chapter in Roger's life.

Around the turn of the century, Roger made a significant purchase, acquiring property in Heyhouses, Lancashire. This investment reflected his ambition and desire to establish himself as a landowner in the region. Roger's dedication and shrewdness did not go unnoticed, and in 1610, he was appointed as the High Sheriff of Lancashire, a prestigious position of authority and responsibility.

Roger's life took an unexpected turn when he was thrust into a notorious episode that would etch his name in history. In 1612, Roger, serving as a Justice of the Peace for Lancashire, found himself at the center of a controversy surrounding a pedlar named John Law. Law's family claimed he had fallen victim to witchcraft, and it was Roger's duty to investigate the matter.

With a sense of duty and impartiality, Roger commenced a thorough examination of the claims made by John Law's family. On April 12, 1612, he presided over a hearing that would send shockwaves through the region. Convinced by the evidence presented, Roger made the decision to commit four women, two of whom were blind and in their eighties, to the confines of Lancaster Gaol, where they awaited trial for witchcraft.

But the saga did not end there. On April 27, 1612, together with another magistrate, Roger committed eight more individuals, six women, and two men, to Lancaster Gaol on similar charges. These individuals were accused of participating in a gathering that took place on Good Friday, April 10, 1612. This gathering, as alleged, involved witchcraft and dark arts.

The events that unfolded during that fateful summer saw numerous alleged witches brought to trial at Lancaster. Many of them, including those Roger had committed to prison, were found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging. These unfortunate souls became known as the Pendle witches, forever etching their names in the annals of history.

Despite his involvement in this notorious episode, Roger Nowell's life continued beyond the trials. Time passed, and Roger's days were filled with the responsibilities that came with his vast holdings. On January 30, 1624, Roger Nowell breathed his last breath in Whalley, Lancashire. The following day, he was laid to rest in the hallowed grounds of Whalley, leaving behind a legacy interwoven with both praise and controversy.

An Inquisition Post Mortem revealed the extent of Roger's wealth and possessions. His estates included the manors of Read and Great Harwood, along with various properties in Lancashire, such as Church, Symonston, Hinckley, and Whalley. Additionally, Roger owned the esteemed manor of East Bradford in Yorkshire, as well as properties in Wakefield, Loftus, Wentbridge, Thorpe Audhill, Darrington, and Oscropp, all located within the bounds of Yorkshire.

Roger Nowell's story was one of ambition, responsibility, and the weight of justice. From his humble beginnings in Read, Lancashire, to his pivotal role in the Pendle witch trials, his life was marked by both triumph and controversy. As the years passed, his name and deeds became part of the tapestry that wove together the history of the region, forever remembered for his role in one of the most infamous witch trials in England's past.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

ROMAN ROAD AND CAMPS (in the heart of the Lancashire countryside,)

In the heart of the Lancashire countryside, nestled among rolling hills and picturesque landscapes, lay a hidden network of ancient Roman roads and camps. These relics of antiquity spoke of a time long past, when the might of the Roman Empire extended its influence far and wide.

One evening, a group of history enthusiasts gathered in a small village hall to listen to Mr. Wilkinson, a local historian well-versed in the secrets of the region. As the audience settled into their seats, Mr. Wilkinson began to share his knowledge about the Roman road that traversed the township of Worsthorne.

The road, he explained, stretched from Colne, known as Colonia in Roman times, to Cambodunum, present-day Slack near Elland. It wound its way through the countryside, passing through Shelfield and the upper part of Thorsdean, before venturing into the rugged Pennine Range at Widdop Head.

Amidst the captivating tales of this ancient thoroughfare, Mr. Wilkinson spoke of the remarkable camps that dotted its path. Perched on the brow of a hill above "Broad Bonk," the audience learned of a circular camp that spanned approximately 30 yards in diameter. Its center, once level as a bowling green, was encircled by breastworks built for defensive purposes.

Further along the road, atop Extwistle Moor, stood another Roman camp, its walls stretching around 45 yards square. This camp, Mr. Wilkinson claimed, was one of the most well-preserved examples in all of Britain. Outlying breastworks added an extra layer of protection to the encampment, standing as a testament to the Roman's military ingenuity.

Not content with just these two fascinating camps, Mr. Wilkinson continued his tale. He spoke of another camp on Worsthorne Moor, a short distance to the east of "Halstead Cote Nook."

This camp, he noted, remained in remarkably good condition, bearing witness to the enduring strength of its construction.

The purpose of these entrenched camps became evident as Mr. Wilkinson explained their historical significance. The Romans had constructed them to maintain open communication across the rugged and inhospitable Pennine region. These wild and barren lands posed challenges for the Romans, but their unwavering determination pushed them forward.

As Mr. Wilkinson painted a vivid picture of the past, the audience's imaginations took flight.

They could almost hear the echoes of Roman soldiers' footsteps, toiling up the steep slopes with the songs of their distant Italian homelands on their lips. These camps became symbols of Roman power and conquest, testaments to the mighty eagles that once soared triumphantly from the shores of the western seas to the far-flung tablelands of Asia.

The lecture concluded, leaving the audience with a newfound appreciation for the rich history etched into their local landscape. Inspired by the tales shared that evening, some individuals set out to explore the Roman road and camps for themselves. They wandered along the ancient path, tracing the footsteps of those long gone, and marveled at the enduring legacy of the Roman Empire.

And so, the story of the Roman road and camps in Worsthorne continued to captivate and inspire, connecting the present-day inhabitants with a distant past and reminding them of the remarkable feats achieved by those who came before.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay in Nelson in Pendle.

The last sale of a wife by auction in this neighbourhood took place on the steps of the Market Cross, in the presence of a large crowd, at Colne May Fair, in 1814. The bidding for the woman was spirited, and she was at length knocked down to a man at the Castle for a few pounds. Directly she heard the result of the sale whether actuated by fear or modesty is not recorded she rushed away at full speed down Windy Bank, and being nimble, ran some distance before her pursuers overtook her.

In the quaint village of Colne, nestled amidst the picturesque countryside, there existed a tradition that had long stirred controversy and ignited the imaginations of those who heard of it. It was the infamous practice of wife auctions, an event that seemed like a relic of a bygone era. The year was 1814, and Colne May Fair was about to witness its last sale of a wife by auction. The townsfolk gathered eagerly around the Market Cross, their eyes filled with curiosity and anticipation. The air was filled with whispers and hushed conversations as they awaited the commencement of this peculiar spectacle. The atmosphere was charged with a mix of excitement and unease, for they knew this event would be etched in the annals of their village's history.

Among the crowd, there stood a woman, her name forgotten in the passage of time, yet her fate forever imprinted on the pages of local lore. She was a figure of mystery, draped in a shroud of uncertainty. Her expression was a blend of trepidation and resignation, perhaps aware of the disquieting destiny that awaited her.

As the auctioneer ascended the steps of the Market Cross, the crowd fell silent. The proceedings commenced, and the bidding began with an unexpected vigor. Men raised their hands, their voices echoing through the square, vying for ownership of this unfortunate woman. The auctioneer's rhythmic chants filled the air, fueling the fervor that had taken hold of the onlookers.

The bidding escalated swiftly, each offer seemingly eclipsing the last. Spectators gasped, some showing visible signs of disapproval, while others eagerly embraced the scandalous nature of the event. The final moments of the auction arrived, and the woman's fate teetered precariously on the precipice.

Then, with a resounding thud of the auctioneer's gavel, the sale was concluded. The woman was sold to a man at the Castle, his victorious bid a mere sum of a few pounds. The crowd erupted into a cacophony of applause and murmurs, acknowledging the conclusion of this controversial event.

As the woman heard the result of the auction, a surge of emotions coursed through her veins. Fear and indignation intertwined within her, overwhelming any sense of propriety. Without hesitation, she broke free from the clutches of those surrounding her and sprinted down Windy Bank, her feet pounding against the cobblestones.

Driven by a potent blend of desperation and determination, she raced forward with a relentless energy. The wind whispered through her hair, urging her onward as she dashed through the verdant countryside. Her nimble figure weaved through the meandering paths, distancing herself from her pursuers.

Behind her, a commotion erupted as the realization of her escape settled upon those who sought to reclaim her. They gave chase, their feet pounding heavily against the ground, fueled by a mix of duty and the urgency to capture their runaway prize.

Yet, the woman's desperation propelled her forward, and she surged ahead, unyielding to the fatigue that threatened to seize her. She pushed her body to the limit, finding reserves of strength she never knew existed.

As the distance between her and her pursuers grew, a glimmer of hope flickered within her weary soul. She knew that her journey was not yet over, that there were many challenges still ahead. However, in that fleeting moment, she reveled in the taste of freedom, relishing the exhilaration of evading the clutches that had bound her.

And so, the woman disappeared into the mists of history, leaving behind a tale of resilience and defiance. Her story echoed through the generations, a testament to the strength of the human spirit and a reminder of the injustices that were once endured. The last

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

SNOW ON PENDLE IN JULY 1806 July the 11th, 1806, Pendle Hill this day covered with snow.

In the warmth of summer's embrace, a tale unfolds, Upon the canvas of time, a sight to behold. July's sun should dance upon fields so green, But nature's whimsy painted a different scene.

In eighteen hundred and six, on this fateful morn, Pendle Hill, majestic, in white was adorned. A rare spectacle, a paradoxical sight, Snowflakes descending, defying logic's might.

Whispers of wonder echoed through the air, As villagers gazed, with a curious stare. Their eyes wide with awe, hearts filled with surprise, For snow in July was nature's sweet disguise.

The hill, once clothed in verdant attire, Now draped in a frosty, crystalline attire. A juxtaposition of seasons, so stark and bold, As winter embraced summer, a tale untold. The meadows and valleys, once kissed by the sun, Now wore a frosty shroud, as if day was undone. The flowers, bewildered, their petals held tight, Their vibrant hues dimmed by winter's slight.

Yet amidst this anomaly, nature found a way, To remind us of her whimsy, her eternal play. For even in the strangest of times and places, Beauty arises, captivating our gazes.

Snowflakes danced gracefully, like whispers of dreams, Melting upon arrival, as transient as moonbeams. They whispered of magic, of mysteries untold, Snow on Pendle in July, a story to behold.

So let us remember, in life's uncertain fray, That wonders abound, even in the strangest array. Nature's enigma, a gentle reminder to see, The extraordinary in the ordinary, our spirits set free.

And though time may pass, and memories fade, The snow on Pendle, in our hearts, is displayed. A reminder of the extraordinary, in the simplest of guise, Snowflakes in July, an eternal surprise.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Lancashire.

Once upon a time, in the quaint town of Accrington, there stood an old and revered establishment known as the Spinning Jenny Club. Nestled within its walls was a theatre lounge, a place where patrons gathered to immerse themselves in the magic of live performances and captivating stories. However, an eerie presence lurked within the lounge, shrouding it in an air of mystery and intrigue.

The tale of the Chilly Room had been whispered through generations, passed down as a chilling legend. Visitors who dared to enter this particular room experienced an inexplicable chill that cut through their bones, regardless of the soaring temperatures outside. It was as if an unseen entity delighted in sending shivers down the spines of those who crossed its threshold.

The poltergeist, as it came to be known, revealed in its mischievous nature. Lights flickered and dimmed unexpectedly, casting eerie shadows that danced on the walls. Performers found themselves enveloped in darkness at the most inopportune moments, their acts disrupted and the audience left bewildered.

Word of the paranormal activity spread, attracting the curious and the brave who sought to witness the ghostly phenomena first-hand. Skeptics dismissed it as mere superstition, while believers yearned for proof of the supernatural. Among these seekers of truth was a group of intrepid investigators determined to unravel the mysteries of the Chilly Room. Led by Dr. Amelia Hartley, a renowned parapsychologist, the team embarked on a daring expedition into the Spinning Jenny Club. Armed with state-of-the-art equipment and unwavering determination, they aimed to capture evidence that would either debunk the tales or confirm the existence of the poltergeist.

As the investigators stepped into the theatre lounge, a sudden drop in temperature sent a collective shiver down their spines. Their breath hung in the air, forming ethereal clouds amidst the chilling atmosphere. Dr. Hartley's heart quickened with anticipation as she sensed a powerful presence surrounding them.

Setting up their equipment, the team meticulously documented their findings. EMF meters flickered, capturing spikes of paranormal energy that defied logical explanation. Temperature sensors recorded dramatic drops in the room's ambient heat, leaving the investigators in awe. The poltergeist seemed to be playing with them, revealing in their pursuit of the truth.

Hours turned into days as the team tirelessly delved deeper into the mysteries of the Chilly Room. Sleep-deprived and on the edge of exhaustion, they refused to surrender to fatigue. They were driven by the desire to uncover the truth, to shed light on the inexplicable.

Then, on a fateful night, as the investigators meticulously reviewed their data, an eerie presence permeated the room. Lights flickered, casting elongated shadows that seemed to dance in unison. The team's anticipation reached its zenith as they watched the room come alive with supernatural energy.

And there, in the midst of the ethereal glow, a form materialized—an apparition suspended between the realms of the living and the departed. The investigators gasped in awe and disbelief, their skepticism shattered in an instant. The poltergeist revealed itself, a specter of forgotten tales, eternally bound to the Spinning Jenny Club.

Through their extensive research, the investigators pieced together the fragmented story of the poltergeist. They discovered that the entity was once a renowned performer who had met a tragic end within the very walls it now haunted. Its longing for the spotlight and the applause of an enraptured audience had transcended death, resulting in a restless spirit seeking solace within the theater lounge.

As the years passed, the story of the Chilly Room spread far and wide, drawing visitors from near and far. The Spinning Jenny Club became a destination for those seeking encounters with the paranormal .

By Donald Jay

The random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

St Leonard's Church, Downham , Lancashire. The Devils Footsteps.

Deep in the heart of Downham, a small village nestled amidst the rolling hills of Lancashire, stood the ancient St. Leonard's Church. It was a place of tranquility and spiritual solace for the villagers, a sanctuary that had weathered the test of time. But within its hallowed walls, there existed a chilling mystery that sent shivers down the spines of those who dared to venture into the shadows.

Legend spoke of an eerie phenomenon known as "The Devil's Footsteps." It was said that during the witching hour, when the moon was obscured by ominous clouds, a spectral presence would manifest within the church. It was believed to be the devil himself, walking through the nave, leaving a trail of ethereal footprints in his wake.

The tale was whispered from generation to generation, passed down as a macabre bedtime story to warn children against venturing near the church after sundown. The villagers lived in a state of perpetual unease, torn between their fascination with the supernatural and the desire to protect themselves from the unknown.

One moonlit night, Emily, a curious young woman with a penchant for adventure, decided to unravel the enigma that had plagued her village for centuries. Driven by her insatiable thirst for knowledge, she embarked on a daring quest to witness the Devil's Footsteps firsthand.

As the clock struck midnight, Emily tiptoed through the cobbled streets, her heart pounding in her chest. She reached the ancient wooden doors of St. Leonard's Church, and with trembling hands, pushed them open. The scent of old timber and dampness filled the air, mingling with a subtle undertone of mystery.

A shroud of darkness enveloped the nave, broken only by the flickering candles that adorned the altar. Emily stepped cautiously, her eyes scanning the shadows for any sign of the devil's spectral presence. The air grew colder, and her breath materialized before her eyes.

Suddenly, a soft whisper echoed through the air, sending a chill down Emily's spine. "Who dares disturb my realm?" a disembodied voice murmured. Emily's heart raced, but she steeled herself, determined to face whatever awaited her.

"I am Emily," she spoke into the darkness, her voice filled with a mixture of fear and curiosity. "I seek answers, knowledge about the Devil's Footsteps. Why does this phenomenon haunt our village?"

Silence engulfed the church, and Emily wondered if her words had fallen upon deaf ears. But then, a dim light flickered from the far end of the nave, revealing a cloaked figure standing before her. It was an elderly man, his eyes twinkling with ancient wisdom.

"You possess great courage, Emily," the old man said, his voice carrying a haunting melody. "The Devil's Footsteps are not what they seem. They are not the machinations of the devil himself, but rather a testament to the resilience of our village."

Emily's brow furrowed in confusion, her curiosity piqued. The old man continued his tale, recounting the events that had taken place centuries ago. He spoke of a time when the village faced a grave peril, besieged by dark forces that sought to bring ruin upon its inhabitants.

In their darkest hour, the villagers united, forming a pact with the supernatural realm. They made a sacrificial offering, dedicating their church as a bastion of light against the encroaching darkness. In return, a benevolent spirit, known as the Guardian, bestowed upon them the Devil's Footsteps—a symbol of protection and a reminder of their indomitable spirit.

Tears welled up in Emily's eyes as she listened, overwhelmed by the resilience and courage of her forefathers. The old man imparted upon her the responsibility of carrying on the village's legacy, safeguarding the secret of the Devil's Footsteps and protecting Downham from the

forces of darkness.

From that moment forward, Emily embraced her newfound purpose. She became the guardian of St. Leonard's Church, ensuring its sanctity and preserving the legacy of the Devil's Footsteps.

The village of Downham thrived under her watchful gaze, and the mysterious phenomenon became a cherished symbol of their enduring spirit.

To this day, visitors to St. Leonard's Church marvel at the ethereal footprints that grace the nave, now understanding the story behind their existence. And Emily's legacy lives on, a testament to the power of curiosity, bravery, and the enduring bond between a village and the mysteries that lie within its midst.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle..

St Mary's Church, Newchurch in Pendle, Lancashire

The small village of Newchurch in Pendle, Lancashire, was known for its quaint charm and its centuries-old St. Mary's Church. Nestled amidst rolling hills and surrounded by an air of mystery, the church held a rich history, with tales of witchcraft and paranormal activity woven into its very fabric.

One cold winter's night, as the year drew to a close, the village prepared for its annual Christmas celebrations. The villagers eagerly anticipated the festive gathering, a time when the community would come together to share warmth, laughter, and stories of old.

Amidst the excitement, a group of friends gathered at St. Mary's Church, their laughter echoing through the empty pews. The church stood tall and imposing, its age evident in its weathered stone walls and ancient architecture. Its western face bore a curious carving resembling an all-seeing "Eye of God," a symbol of divine presence and watchfulness.

As the day wore on, darkness enveloped the village, casting long shadows that danced in the pale moonlight. The church, usually a place of solace, took on an eerie ambiance under the shroud of night. The group, undeterred by the unsettling atmosphere, sat down to enjoy a late Christmas dinner.

The warmth of the gathering and the aroma of the feast filled the air, providing a stark contrast to the chilly surroundings. Candles flickered, casting eerie shadows on the stone walls as the conversation flowed. Stories of local legends and ghostly encounters were shared, adding to the electric atmosphere.

Amidst the tales, one local resident, known for her fascination with the paranormal, whispered about a recent ghostly sighting. She claimed to have captured a photograph of a black-eyed spirit, peering out from a gravestone with a deathly white face. The tale sent a shiver down the spines of those gathered, and curious eyes turned towards the speaker.

Intrigued, the friends begged her to share the photograph, and with trembling hands, she produced her phone. As the image materialized on the screen, a collective gasp echoed through the room. There, frozen in time, was the visage of a young girl with pale skin and haunting black eyes. Her gaze seemed to pierce the very souls of those who beheld her.

Silence enveloped the room as the weight of the photograph settled upon the group. Was this the restless spirit of a long-departed soul? Or perhaps an apparition bound to the church, forever trapped between realms? Fear mingled with curiosity, and each person grappled with their own emotions.

Suddenly, a gust of wind rattled the old windows, causing the candles to flicker and dance wildly. The room grew colder, and a sense of unease permeated the air. The group exchanged nervous glances, wondering if their presence had stirred something unseen.

Then, from the darkest corner of the church, a soft whisper emerged. It seemed to carry on the wind, barely audible yet undeniably present. The words echoed through the silence, chilling the bones of those who listened.

"Release me," the voice pleaded, a mournful cry from the beyond. "Release me from this eternal torment."

The friends, overcome with a mixture of fear and compassion, huddled together, seeking solace in their shared humanity. They whispered words of comfort, promising to seek answers and offer help to the tormented spirit.

As they made their way out of the church, their hearts heavy with the weight of what they had witnessed, they vowed to uncover the truth behind the ghostly apparition. Determined to bring

peace to the lost soul, they delved into the history of St. Mary's Church, seeking clues that would unlock the mystery.

Little did they know that their journey would lead them down a path lined with forgotten secrets, ancient curses, and the lingering echoes of the witch trials that had plagued Pendle centuries ago.

The spirit's plea for release would unravel a tale of darkness and redemption, forever etching its mark upon the souls of those brave enough to face the shadows that haunted St. Mary's Church in Newchurch.

Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Local legend whispered that this was the final resting place of Alice Nutter, St. Mary's Church, Newchurch in Pendle.

In the quaint village of Newchurch in Pendle, stood St. Mary's Church, an ancient structure that had become an integral part of the community. With its towering presence at the centre of the village, it commanded attention and held within it a rich history.

The church's oldest part was its tower, dating back to 1544. Perched atop the tower was a peculiar sight—a curious "eye of God," an elliptic shape believed to watch over the village. The eye had been installed years after the infamous execution of the witches, serving as a symbolic ward against evil spirits that may still lingered. The main body of the church had been constructed in the seventeenth century, adding to the architectural tapestry of the village.

Within the church grounds, situated to the east of the porch and against the south wall, lay the grave of a member of the Nutter family. The stone that marked the grave was intricately carved with a skull and crossbones, evoking a sense of mortality. Local legend whispered that this was the final resting place of Alice Nutter, a gentlewoman from nearby Roughlee Hall who had met her tragic end as one of the Pendle Witches in 1612. However, it was uncommon for executed witches to receive a Christian burial in consecrated ground. The skull and crossbones on the stone served as a memento mori, a somber reminder to onlookers of their own mortality.

The Demdikes, a family led by Elizabeth Southernns, known as Old Demdike, played a central role in the story of the Pendle witches. Living in Newchurch in Pendle during the seventeenth century, the Demdikes were one of the accused families. The tale of the Pendle witches revolved around these two destitute families—the Chattoxes and the Demdikes—who were believed to possess an affinity for black magic, capitalizing on their local reputation.

Centuries ago, the village was known as "Goldshaw Booth," with the term "booth" originating from the Norse word "but," meaning dwelling place. However, as time passed, the name transformed into "Newchurch in Pendle Forest." Eventually, to simplify and reflect its close ties with the Pendle region, it became known as "Newchurch in Pendle."

In this picturesque village, nestled in the rolling hills and surrounded by the enchanting Pendle Forest, the echoes of history could still be heard. St. Mary's Church stood as a testament to the stories woven through time, from the watchful eye of God guarding the villagers to the tales of witches and their mysterious presence. Newchurch in Pendle held its secrets close, inviting visitors to delve into its past and discover the enchantment that lingered in its ancient streets.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Sweet Caroline. Attended Nelson Salvation Army in Lancashire.

In a town called Nelson, at the Salvation Army, There lived a young lass named sweet Caroline,
so merry. With coffee mornings and gatherings, she lent a helping hand, But a peculiar incident
occurred, a tale quite grand.

One day, as she bent down to pick up a thing, The Captain of the corps found a sight quite
disturbing. For as Caroline leaned, her attire did fall short, And alas, a surprising sight was
brought forth.

From behind, one could see, to everyone's surprise, A glimpse of testicles hanging down,
causing some sighs. The Captain, quite flustered, decided to intervene, Suggesting Caroline
should hide what was seen.

"Go home," he said, "and put on larger knickers or a skirt, Or perhaps a pair of pants to conceal
what may hurt." Though Caroline was taken aback by this unusual command, She nodded,
understanding the Captain's reprimand.

So off she went, determined to amend her attire, To ensure her testicles no longer caused a stir
or fire. But let us not forget, in this peculiar tale's core, The lesson of acceptance and respect, for
evermore.

For appearances can deceive and assumptions may be wrong, And it's crucial to treat each other
with kindness and belong. So here's to sweet Caroline, with her unique display, A reminder to
embrace diversity and love in every way.

By Donald Jay

Sweet Caroline. Nelson in Lancashire.

Caroline had spent over forty years living as a man but deep inside, she knew something wasn't quite right. It wasn't until two years ago that she finally found the courage to embrace her true identity and live as a woman. Caroline, born with both male and female sex organs, had been brought up without knowledge of her intersex condition. Her parents had made the difficult decision to hide her female genitalia through surgery and keep her true identity a secret.

Caroline's journey of self-discovery began when she was 19 and learned the truth about her rare condition. She was initially shocked and confused, realizing that she had always felt different but never understood why. As she grew older, she faced difficulties fitting in and struggled with her identity. The taunts and rejection from her peers during school made her feel isolated, and she never quite found a sense of belonging.

Throughout her adult life, Caroline tried to live as a man, but the internal turmoil and depression only grew. Her marriage ended quickly, and she found solace working as a kitchen porter in restaurants and pubs. It wasn't until two years ago, in a desperate attempt to find happiness, that she decided to embrace her true self and start living as a woman.

Embracing her female persona was initially challenging for Caroline. Having only known how to dress and present herself as a man, it was a significant change. However, she quickly realized that it was the right decision for her. Taking on her female identity brought a sense of balance and happiness that had eluded her for so long. Caroline finally felt like she was living authentically.

Although her transition has brought her newfound joy, Caroline still faces discrimination and prejudice. Not everyone accepts her for who she is, and she experiences daily challenges. However, she remains determined to fight for acceptance and raise awareness about intersex individuals and their unique struggles. The UK Intersex Association supports her in this mission, emphasizing the need to distinguish intersex people from transgender individuals due to a lack of understanding.

Caroline's story serves as a reminder that being intersex is not a lifestyle choice but a medical condition. She hopes that her journey will inspire others facing similar challenges and let them know they are not alone. Caroline plans to undergo surgery to remove her male genitalia permanently, hoping it will help her leave the past behind and find love and acceptance.

Dr. Hayes-Light, the director of the UK Intersex Association, echoes Caroline's call for greater tolerance and understanding. Discrimination against intersex individuals has long been hidden and overlooked, and it is time for society to embrace and support their rights just as they do for other marginalized communities. By sharing her story, Caroline aims to bring about positive change and create a kinder world.

Caroline's journey of self-acceptance and resilience shows that embracing one's true identity can lead to a happier and more fulfilling life. She hopes that her story will encourage people to be less judgmental and foster a more inclusive society where everyone can live authentically and find the love and acceptance they deserve.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Tailor's Cross and Low Well, Foulridge.

In the quaint village of Foulridge, nestled in the heart of Lancashire, two historical landmarks stood side by side—Tailor's Cross and Low Well. These landmarks held stories of the past, whispered secrets that had been passed down through generations.

Tailor's Cross, also known as Maiden's Cross or Foulridge Cross, was a relic from the Norman era. Weathered by time and made of millstone grit, it stood alongside the Foulridge War Memorial. Although modest in size, it held a mysterious charm. Upon closer inspection, one could observe its unique features—a ring-headed cross with a flat central disc, adorned with a pair of carved shears. These shears, their meaning lost to time, added an air of intrigue to the ancient cross.

Experts debated its origin and age. Some believed it to be from the 12th century, while others argued for a later 13th-century date. One thing was certain—it was unlike any other cross in Lancashire. Its closest relative was a Norman cross in Stanground, Huntingdonshire. Professor Richard Bailey, a renowned expert in Lancashire sculpture, dated both crosses to the 12th century.

In the year 1900, Henry Taylor meticulously described Tailor's Cross in his book on crosses and holy wells of Lancashire. Back then, the cross stood much taller, with only four feet visible above the grass. Taylor noted that it was socketed to an oval stone pedestal, the large stone now lost to time.

Over the years, the cross had been moved from its original location. Taylor mentioned it standing on a little hill, one mile north of Colne Parish Church. However, the Foulridge Parish Council's website stated that it had stood beside Kirk Bridge, between Foulridge Lower and Upper Reservoirs. Today, it found its home at the Foulridge War Memorial, where it stood apart from the bustling road, surrounded by a paved area and seating.

Legends and tales had intertwined with Tailor's Cross, giving rise to its alternate name—Tailor's Cross. One local folklore suggested that a tailor from Foulridge had defied Oliver Cromwell's men by refusing to make uniforms for them. As punishment, he was sentenced to death, and the shears were carved on the stone as a warning to others. However, the carving predated the Civil War by centuries, rendering the tale implausible.

Another story linked to the cross portrayed the Royalists as the villains. According to this tale, a young woman named Margaret Burnard (or Barnard) had patiently waited at the cross every evening for her fiancé, Robert, to return from the Civil War. Tragically, Robert had fallen in the Battle of Marston Moor, but Margaret refused to accept his demise and continued her vigil. It was said that Royalist soldiers, infuriated by her unwavering hope, took her life. She was buried where the cross now stood. While similar stories existed across Britain, this tale was likely fabricated to explain the name Maiden's Cross.

Leaving Tailor's Cross behind, a short journey up Skipton New Road led to the next historic landmark—Low Well. Located on Towngate, this well had once been the primary water source for the village. Two large hand-chiseled troughs and a pump comprised the restored well. A blue plaque proudly declared its significance, stating that for years it had provided water to the village until it ran dry in the twentieth century. To commemorate the millennium, the parish council reinstated the well, complete with a recycling pump.

Tailor's Cross and Low Well stood as testaments to Foulridge's rich history. Each held stories and mysteries, connecting the present with a distant past. Visitors and locals alike would gaze

upon them, feeling a sense of awe and wonder as they delved into the tales that whispered from their weathered surfaces.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Lancashire.

The Bland – Anderton Curse.

Alice Ann Bland married an Anderton they lived at 28 Duerden Street Nelson Alice said she would wake up in the night and see a little blond haired girl sitting at the bottom of her bed Alice Ann also practised The Spirit Board) A Ouija board one day while playing with it with her grand daughter the kitchen table flew across the room. When Alice Ann died the little girl was seen on a regular bases sat at the bottom of Alice Ann's sons ben Stanley Anderton when he died it as never been seen since

In the quiet town of Nelson, nestled on Duerden Street, there resided a family haunted by an eerie curse. It all began when Alice Ann Bland, a young woman with a fiery spirit, married into the Anderton family. From the moment she stepped foot into her new home at 28 Duerden Street, strange occurrences began to unfold.

Alice Ann would often awaken in the dead of night, startled by the presence of a little blond-haired girl sitting at the foot of her bed. The child's ghostly figure exuded an otherworldly aura, leaving Alice Ann unsettled and filled with curiosity about her origin. Determined to seek answers, she delved into the realm of the supernatural, practising the use of a Spirit Board, more commonly known as a Ouija board.

One fateful day, as Alice Ann played with the Spirit Board alongside her granddaughter, an unprecedented event shook the household. The kitchen table, seemingly possessed by an unseen force, flew across the room, creating chaos and bewilderment. The Anderton family was left in awe, contemplating the power and implications of the supernatural forces that surrounded them. As the years went by, the little blond-haired girl continued to make appearances, regularly sitting at the bottom of Alice Ann's son's bed, Ben Stanley Anderton. The family grew accustomed to her spectral presence, accepting it as an undeniable part of their lives. However, her intentions remained a mystery.

Time, as it always does, pressed forward relentlessly. Tragedy struck the Anderton family when Stanley's Anderton met an untimely demise. Curiously, with his passing, the little girl's ethereal visits abruptly ceased. It was as if her purpose had been fulfilled, her connection to the family severed.

Years turned into decades, and the memory of the Bland Anderton Curse lingered like a whisper in the winds of Nelson. The town's residents recounted tales of the haunted household and the mysterious little girl who haunted its inhabitants. But as generations passed, the stories grew faint, overshadowed by the march of time.

Today, 28 Duerden Street stands as a relic of the past, its walls harbouring the echoes of a bygone era long gone. The Anderton family's descendants have moved on, weaving their lives elsewhere, their tales of the curse passed down through whispers and folklore. Though the little girl's presence has never been witnessed since Ben Stanley Anderton's passing, the Bland Anderton Curse remains a haunting reminder of the mysteries that lie hidden within the realm of the supernatural.

And so, the story of the Bland-Anderton Curse lives on, entwined with the fabric of Nelson's history, leaving future generations to ponder the enigmatic bond between the living and the dead, forever captivated by the lure of the unknown.

This story is a true one.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

THE BYRELAWS OF EXTWISELL.

In days of old, on Extwistle Moor, Shepherds and farmers sought to explore, A way to govern their sheep and their flock, To uphold order on the grazing rock.
With John Parker and John Towneley's aid, They devised a code, rules were made, To guide their actions, to keep them in line, And ensure harmony for woolly and kine.
First, four Byrelaw men were chosen with care, To watch over the township, their duty to bear. No townsman could take a beast, sheep, or horse, Unless in need, a livelihood's source.

For those who dared to cut thorns in Swindean, A penalty awaited, two shillings and fourteen, Staving the thrones brought a lesser price, One shilling would suffice, not quite as precise.

Slate and lime, the goods of the town, Should not be sold, or else a frown, A fine for each waineload, twelve pence high, To deter those who sought profit from the sky.
Strayed goods impounded, their owners must pay, For horses and mares, sixpence they'd lay, Horned beasts, save sheep, fourpence to meet, And for each sheep, a single penny, sweet.

Foulde breaks incurred a heavier cost, Six shillings and eightpence, a price not lost, Serving men limited to a flock of ten, Without Byrelaw-men's consent, no more, amen.
Ring yards, a necessity in their decree, By the fifteenth of March, they must surely be, Else a fine of two shillings and fourteen, To urge timely action, to keep fields serene.
From the Nativity feast to September's end, No mowing, no shearing, no harvest to tend, For each violation, a fine of two shillings, To teach them to honor those seasonal billings.

Neighborly disputes, a cause for concern, If found guilty, payment they'd soon learn, Three shillings and fourteen pence as the fee, To discourage ill deeds, to foster unity.
Breaking hedges, cutting wood without right, A fine of two shillings and fourteen, they'd cite, To safeguard the land, its boundaries secure, To preserve the landscape, both gentle and pure.

These were the bylaws of Extwistle's past, A testament to order, a harmony to cast, Through shepherd's care and farmer's hand, They sought a balance, in this timeless land.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The Camp at Thornton-in-Craven

The Camp at Thornton-in-Craven was a place of turmoil and conflict during the civil wars. The castle at Skipton, held by Sir John Malory and his loyalist garrison, faced a prolonged siege by General Lambert and his soldiers from the Commonwealth. As the siege continued, the Cromwellians established strong garrisons at Thornton and Fisburne, not only to provide forage for their troops but also to suppress the Royalist presence in East Lancashire and the neighboring valleys.

In this volatile environment, Edward Parker, a resident of Browsholme, found himself caught in the crossfire. Both sides repeatedly plundered his house, taking valuables such as silverware, clothing, and even livestock. Seeking protection, Parker obtained letters from both the Roundheads and the Royalists, pleading for his property and person to be spared. These letters served as temporary shields against the rampant pillaging.

Meanwhile, the Lancashire aristocracy indulged in more lighthearted pursuits amidst the chaos of war. In a letter from July 1688, a certain A. Pudsey invited Edward Parker to join him in attending a footrace near Leeds. They planned to meet at Bolton or Gisborne, and Pudsey hoped Parker would accompany him, envisioning a day of entertainment and camaraderie with other acquaintances. The letter revealed a brief respite from the harsh realities of the ongoing conflict. Returning to the camp at Thornton, the Roundheads launched a raid into Briercliffe and Extwistle, targeting Royalist supporters. They ransacked High Halstead, causing an uproar that reached Edward Parker's ears. Swiftly, he gathered his cattle and hid them in Runclehurst Wood, while also securing most of the valuables in his hall. Frustrated by their inability to access the hidden goods, the raiders attempted to set fire to the place, but their hasty departure limited the damage inflicted.

Amidst these events, Prince Rupert and his army arrived in Lancashire, aiming to relieve the besieged Lathom House. General Rigby, in command of the besiegers, withdrew to Bolton with his troops. The storming of Bolton soon followed, leading to the Royalists flooding into the Burnley valley on their way to join the King's forces in York. They splintered into smaller groups to forage along their route, indiscriminately plundering both allies and adversaries. One group of 200 soldiers descended upon Worsthorpe, seizing food and drink from the farmers' larders. The officers established themselves at an old public house, known as "Cross House," while the common soldiers took shelter in barns and shippens for the night. The next morning, they drove off the cattle from the surrounding fields. Fueled by anger at their mistreatment, the farmers armed themselves and pursued the marauders, desperate to rescue their stolen livestock. At Cockden Water, a handful of straggling soldiers fell behind, giving the pursuing farmers an opportunity to catch up. A fierce struggle erupted near Miss Halstead's barn, resulting in the deaths of two farmers, Peter Hitchon of Worsthorpe and Barnard Smith of Hurstwood. Their names would later be recorded in the Burnley Parish Church register, commemorating their sacrifice in the face of the invaders.

The story of the Camp at Thornton-in-Craven captures the chaos and hardships faced by the people of Lancashire during the civil wars. It is a tale of plunder and protection, of respite and revelry, and ultimately, of the grim reality that war leaves in its wake.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The charming cottage they purchased on Knott's Lane Colne Lancashire seemed like the perfect sanctuary for Auntie Nelly and Uncle Fred. Nestled amidst rolling hills and surrounded by a thick forest, it exuded an air of tranquility that they desperately needed after the horrors of the war. Little did they know that their new home held secrets of the supernatural kind.

On their first night in the cottage, strange sounds echoed through the halls, as if invisible footsteps wandered aimlessly. Doors creaked open and shut on their own accord, and eerie whispers whispered secrets only the wind could hear. Uncle Fred dismissed it as an old house settling, but Auntie Nelly's intuition told her there was more to it.

Curiosity got the better of Auntie Nelly, and she delved into the local history of Colne. It didn't take long for her to stumble upon tales of ghostly apparitions and unexplained phenomena that had plagued the town for centuries. Knotts Lane, in particular, had a reputation for being a hotspot for supernatural occurrences.

Legend had it that a vengeful spirit, known as the "Bogart of Knotts Lane," haunted the area.

The Bogart was said to be a malevolent ghost, known for playing mischievous pranks on unsuspecting victims. It would hide belongings, create strange noises, and cause general havoc, leaving residents perplexed and fearful.

Undeterred, Auntie Nelly decided to confront the paranormal presence head-on. Armed with candles, sage, and a heart full of courage, she embarked on a journey to uncover the truth behind the hauntings. Uncle Fred, supportive but skeptical, stood by her side.

As the clock struck midnight, they lit the candles and began their ritual. The sage filled the air with its pungent aroma as Auntie Nelly called out to the spirits, pleading for answers. Suddenly, a cold breeze swept through the room, extinguishing the candles and plunging them into darkness.

In the shadows, a faint figure emerged, its features ethereal and translucent. The Bogart of Knotts Lane revealed itself, a mischievous grin stretching across its face. It danced and twirled, its ghostly presence both eerie and captivating.

Auntie Nelly summoned all her courage and spoke directly to the Bogart. She asked why it tormented the residents of Knotts Lane, why it refused to find peace in the afterlife. The ghostly figure paused, its playful expression turning somber.

Through whispers carried on the wind, the Bogart revealed its tragic tale. Centuries ago, it had been a misjudged soul, wronged by a powerful sorcerer who had cursed it to wander the mortal realm indefinitely. Its only hope for release was to pass on the curse to another unsuspecting victim, continuing the cycle of torment.

Touched by the Bogart's plight, Auntie Nelly and Uncle Fred vowed to break the curse. They sought the guidance of a wise old witch who lived on the outskirts of Colne, known for her mastery over the supernatural.

The witch shared her wisdom, revealing an ancient incantation that could lift the curse once and for all. With renewed determination, Auntie Nelly and Uncle Fred returned to Knotts Lane, armed with the knowledge to set the Bogart free.

Under the moonlit sky, they recited the incantation, their voices strong and resolute. As the final words escaped their lips, a burst of light erupted from the Bogart, illuminating the entire lane. With a sigh of relief, the spirit dissolved into the night, finally finding peace after centuries of torment.

From that day forward, Knotts Lane became a place of tranquility, free from the haunting presence that had once plagued it. Auntie Nelly and Uncle Fred, hailed as local heroes, continued to live in their beloved cottage, cherishing the bond they had forged with the paranormal world.

Their story echoed through the generations, a reminder that sometimes, in the face of the

unknown, it takes courage, compassion, and a touch of mysticism to bring light to the darkest corners of our existence. And so, the legend of the Bogart of Knotts Lane passed into folklore, a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the power of love.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

The Devil Flying Over a Cottage in Barley Lancashire.

Deep in the heart of Pendle, Lancashire, stood a quaint cottage tucked away amidst a sea of trees.

Its weathered walls held secrets, and its creaking timbers whispered tales of the supernatural.

Legend had it that the devil himself had a fondness for this desolate place, drawn to the darkness that lingered within.

Olive, an elderly woman, had chosen this cottage as her final retreat from the world. She sought solace in its isolation, unaware of the horrors that awaited her. As the sun sank below the horizon, casting long shadows across the landscape, a sinister presence began to stir.

One fateful night, as Olive prepared for slumber, a sense of unease settled upon her. The air grew heavy, suffocating her fragile senses. If that wasn't terrifying enough, a chilling gust of wind howled through the trees outside, rattling the windows and carrying with it an otherworldly presence.

As Olive lay in her bed, her eyes fixed upon the ceiling, she heard a sound that sent shivers down her spine. Heavy wings flapped overhead, the rhythmic beats echoing through the cottage.

The demonic fluttering grew louder, drowning out the beating of her own heart.

Trepidation took hold of Olive as she frantically scanned the room for the source of the sinister sound. Yet, to her bewilderment, she could see nothing but the dimly lit walls surrounding her.

The terror escalated when the bedroom door, burdened by an unseen force, began to creak open.

Petrified, Olive's breath caught in her throat as the door swung wider, revealing a darkness that seemed to swallow the very essence of the room. Panic surged through her veins, propelling her out of the bed in a frenzied dash for safety.

With trembling legs, she stumbled into the hallway, her heart pounding in her chest. The cottage seemed alive, its eerie silence broken only by the sound of her ragged breaths. She dared not look back, afraid of what she might find pursuing her.

As Olive raced through the narrow corridors, a sinister presence pursued her relentlessly.

Shadows danced along the walls, elongating and distorting into grotesque forms. Whispers filled the air, murmuring words of despair and temptation, as if the devil himself taunted her from the darkness.

With each passing moment, Olive felt her strength wane, her resolve weakening. She could feel the grip of evil tightening around her, threatening to consume her very soul. Desperation pushed her onward, as she clung to the last vestiges of hope.

Finally, Olive burst through the cottage's front door, gasping for air. She stumbled onto the dew-soaked grass, her eyes scanning the night sky for any sign of the demonic presence that had haunted her sanctuary. But the devil had retreated, leaving her trembling in the wake of his terrifying visitation.

From that night forward, Olive lived with the knowledge that evil lurked in the shadows, always watching, always waiting. The memory of the devil's visitation haunted her every waking moment, a chilling reminder that some forces are beyond human comprehension.

And so, the cottage in Lancashire remained a place of dark legend, a testament to the horrors that can manifest in the quietest of corners. As for Olive, she carried the weight of that encounter until the end of her days, forever changed by the touch of the devil in the night sky.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The Devil in The Lancashire Valley (Colne).

Auntie Nelly cautiously stepped out of her room and ventured down the hallway, following the haunting melody. The singing grew louder as she approached the staircase, beckoning her to explore its source. With a mix of trepidation and curiosity, she descended the creaking steps, each one echoing her heartbeat.

As she reached the ground floor, the ethereal voices seemed to surround her, resonating through the empty corridors of the converted factory. The atmosphere was electric, charged with an otherworldly energy that sent shivers down her spine. The singing seemed to draw her towards the church, just a stone's throw away from the factory.

Without hesitation, Auntie Nelly stepped outside into the cold, wintry night. The Lancashire Valley lay silent and dark, save for the distant glow of the munitions factory. The sounds of the choir grew stronger, compelling her to follow their celestial chorus.

She hurried through the village, her feet crunching on the frost-covered ground. The closer she got to the church, the more the singing enveloped her, captivating her senses. The doors of Holy Trinity Church Colne stood open, revealing a warm, golden light pouring out from within.

Auntie Nelly cautiously stepped inside the church, and her breath caught in her throat. The sight before her was breathtaking. The pews were filled with translucent figures, ethereal and radiant, their voices intertwining in a symphony of celestial beauty. She could hardly believe her eyes.

In the center of the congregation, stood a figure that radiated an aura of both majesty and darkness. It was a man, impeccably dressed in a black suit, his eyes gleaming with an enigmatic intensity. Auntie Nelly's heart skipped a beat as she realized she was in the presence of something otherworldly—a being that was neither angel nor mortal.

The figure turned towards her, his piercing gaze locking with hers. Auntie Nelly felt a mix of fear and fascination, unable to tear her eyes away. The mysterious entity spoke, his voice resonating with a captivating charm.

"Fear not, mortal," he said, his voice silky smooth yet tinged with an undercurrent of darkness. "You have been chosen to witness a convergence of realms, a glimpse into the extraordinary."

Auntie Nelly's voice trembled as she managed to respond, "Who... who are you?"

The figure smiled, a smile that held both secrets and promises. "I am known by many names, but in this place, I am the Devil of the Lancashire Valley."

A chill ran down Auntie Nelly's spine, but she couldn't tear herself away from the captivating presence of the Devil. She listened as he recounted tales of the Valley's forgotten folklore, of ancient spirits and hidden wonders that lay dormant beneath the mundane surface.

As the night wore on, the Devil's stories wove a tapestry of enchantment and mystery. Auntie Nelly was both entranced and disturbed by the revelations, her perception of the world forever altered. The ethereal choir continued to sing, their melodies lulling her into a trance-like state. As dawn approached, the Devil's voice grew faint, and the figures in the church began to fade. Auntie Nelly found herself alone, standing in the empty church, her mind swirling with a newfound understanding of the supernatural that surrounded her.

From that day forward, Auntie Nelly became a guardian of the Lancashire Valley's secrets, sharing her experiences with those who possessed an open mind and a yearning for the extraordinary. She continued her work at the munitions factory, but her nights were filled with the whispers of forgotten spirits and the echoes of the Devil's haunting melodies.

The Devil of the Lancashire Valley had chosen her, and Auntie Nelly embraced her role with a mix of trepidation and reverence. She had glimpsed a world beyond the mortal realm, and in doing so, she had become a bridge between the ordinary and the extraordinary—an embodiment

of the hidden magic that resided in the Lancashire Valley.
By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

THE ENCLOSURE OF EXTWISTLE MOOR

In the early 19th century, Extwistle Moor stood as a vast expanse of land, its boundary extending from Extwistle Mill to Monk Hall farm. Life on the moor was rugged and challenging, particularly for the working classes who struggled to find employment during a period of severe economic downturn known as "Dole time."

The year was 1825, and the air was heavy with hunger and desperation. The scarcity of work left families impoverished and famished. The price of flour soared to exorbitant levels, forcing the handloom weavers, among others, to survive on meager portions of barley porridge. These dark days were aptly dubbed "Barley time."

Amidst this bleak landscape, a young essayist, his thoughts filled with memories of the past, stood before an audience. He surveyed the respectable and well-fed gathering before him, reflecting on the stark contrast to the clog-wearing, porridge-consuming population of his childhood.

The essayist recounted the hardships endured by his own family, who struggled to provide for their numerous children. Blue milk, so thin it resembled water, was their daily sustenance. Meal porridge became a monotonous staple, consumed twenty-one times a week if the meal lasted. A pair of new clogs, ironed around the sides, was considered a luxury—a symbol of relative prosperity in those challenging times.

Yet, the essayist emphasized that their plight was not unique; it was a shared experience across the entire country. The dire conditions of "Dole time" affected countless families, leaving them with empty stomachs and little hope for a brighter future. The essayist spoke not only of his own struggles but also appealed to the collective memory of the audience, urging them to bear witness to the truth he shared.

As he concluded his speech, the essayist expressed gratitude that those days of hardship were now in the past. The audience, with their well-fed bodies and neatly dressed attire, nodded in agreement. The years had brought progress and prosperity, freeing them from the shackles of hunger and destitution. They shared in the essayist's hope that such times would never resurface, and that future generations would be spared the suffering they once endured.

With a sense of relief and renewed determination, the gathering dispersed, carrying with them the collective memory of "Barley time." They walked away, grateful for the comforts they enjoyed and vowing to cherish the progress that had been made. And as the enclosures of Extwistle Moor stood as a reminder of their shared history, they moved forward, guided by the belief that the past should never be forgotten, and the future should always be a beacon of hope.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The Golden Girls of Pendle in the 1600s
This is how it should have gone down?.

In the quaint countryside of Pendle, nestled in the heart of England, lived two remarkable women named Anne Whittle, known as Old Mother Chattox, and Elizabeth Southern, referred to as Old Mother Demdike. These two women were the embodiment of the rich traditions and knowledge passed down through generations, earning them the reputation as the Golden Girls of the Pendle area.

Anne and Elizabeth were descendants of a long line of intuitive healers, whose expertise and wisdom had been passed down from their grandmothers to their mothers and finally to them. They possessed a deep connection with Mother Nature and her healing powers, using herbs, remedies, and ancient techniques to alleviate the sufferings of their community.

Their skills were diverse and encompassed various aspects of holistic healthcare. The Golden Girls were renowned as skilled midwives, offering comfort and support to expectant mothers during childbirth. Their gentle hands brought countless babies into the world, ensuring the safety and well-being of both mother and child.

But their healing abilities extended far beyond the birthing chamber. The women were tireless in their efforts to aid the sick, whether human or animal. They had a deep understanding of the intricate connections between the natural world and human health, harnessing the power of herbs and plants to treat a myriad of ailments. From simple fevers to more complex illnesses, they were revered for their ability to restore health and vitality.

In the quiet solitude of their cottage, surrounded by lush herb gardens, Anne and Elizabeth spent hours concocting remedies and potions. They would carefully gather herbs from the countryside, venturing into the wilderness with baskets in hand, searching for hidden treasures of nature's pharmacy. Each herb they collected held a purpose, a secret remedy waiting to be discovered.

The Golden Girls believed in the power of prevention and emphasized the importance of dietary therapy. They encouraged their community to embrace natural, wholesome foods, fostering a deep connection with the land and its bountiful offerings. By educating others about the benefits of a balanced diet and herbal supplementation, they aimed to prevent illness before it took hold.

But their path was not without obstacles. In an era when traditional healers faced suspicion and persecution, the Golden Girls had their fair share of challenges. Accusations of witchcraft and heresy loomed over them, fueled by the fear and ignorance of the times. However, the Golden Girls' genuine intentions and unwavering dedication to healing prevailed, as they continued to do justice to the memory of the countless women before them who simply sought to heal the sick.

As the years passed, Anne and Elizabeth became cherished figures in their community. Their compassion, wisdom, and unwavering commitment to their calling earned them the respect and gratitude of all who sought their aid. They were seen as pillars of strength and knowledge, embodying the legacy of the women who came before them. The Golden Girls of the Pendle area left an indelible mark on the history of healing in their region. Their legacy lives on in the stories whispered among the villagers, passed down from generation to generation. The memory of Anne Whittle, Old Mother Chattox, and Elizabeth Southern, Old Mother Demdike, remains a testament to the enduring

power of the human spirit and the transformative abilities of nature's remedies. Their story serves as a reminder to honour and cherish the wisdom of those who dedicate their lives to easing the suffering of others and nurturing the delicate balance between humanity and the natural world.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Poem.

The joys of a full English breakfast.

In the realm of breakfast delights, A feast of flavours takes its flight. Behold, the treasure that graces the plate, The full English breakfast, a glorious state.

Let us embark on this savoury affair, Where mornings are adorned with utmost care. From countryside kitchens to bustling diners, A symphony of tastes that never tires.

First, the sun rises with golden delight, As sunny-side-up eggs shine ever so bright. Their yolks, like orbs of pure morning bliss, A heavenly kiss, the perfect sunrise.

Bacon sizzles, its aroma fills the air, Crisp and tender, a taste beyond compare. Its smoky embrace, a savoury sensation, Ignites the senses with elation.

Next, plump sausages take centre stage, Juicy and succulent, a culinary gauge. Their seasoned perfection, a hearty embrace, Awakening taste buds with every trace.

Mushrooms join the grand breakfast parade, Earthiness and texture, a delightful charade. Grilled to perfection, a delicate dance, Adding depth to this morning romance.

Oh, the sweet embrace of baked beans, A touch of sweetness, a taste that gleams. They mingle with the rest, a harmonious blend, Creating flavours that know no end.

Tomatoes, roasted and bursting with glee, A burst of freshness, a vibrant decree. Their tangy allure, a zesty sensation, Balancing the richness with jubilation.

And let us not forget the humble toast, A canvas of warmth, a foundation to boast. Butter and jam, a spread so divine, Completing the picture, a breakfast design.

The full English breakfast, a morning feast, Where flavours and textures never cease. A symphony of indulgence, a culinary delight, Bringing joy to every morning's light.

So, rise and shine, embrace this morning fare, A celebration of flavours beyond compare. For in each bite, a tale is unfurled, Of the joys found in a full English breakfast world.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The Knacker wagon cometh rolling down our street
Calling at the local butchers shops taking
away the old bones a fat you see. It calls at the slaughter house. The tannery it goes to as well. It
calls at the farms and small holdings To take away dead cows and pigs and sheep the smell from
this wagon would make anyone fell sick it took all the stuff back to the Knacker yard to boil and
treat the stuff For Fats to make soap and candles And stuff to make the glue. And many more
things it made from this potent brew

Poem. The Knacker wagon cometh rolling down our street

In the realm of the mundane and macabre, Where shadows dance with the stench of afar, There
rolls a wagon, on wheels of fate, A Knacker's chariot, with a somber weight.
Down our street, its presence announces, To the butchers' shops, where age renounces, The
bones of creatures, once full of life, Now relinquished to this vessel of strife.
The slaughterhouse, a melancholy call, To collect the remnants, where life did fall, The tannery
too, with its eerie appeal, Whispers of hides, bearing the pain they conceal.
Farms and small holdings, they tremble in dread, For the wagon arrives, to collect the dead,
Cows and pigs and sheep, their earthly demise, Their scent, a haunting chorus, beneath gloomy
skies.
Oh, the smell it emits, a putrid cascade, A nauseating aroma, where senses degrade, Yet, onward
it travels, this Knacker's crusade, To the yard of its dwelling, where secrets pervade.
There, in that grim abode, the cauldrons brew, To boil and treat, to transform the view, For fats
to yield soap and candles' flame, And glue to bind, under life's complex frame.
Oh, the mysteries concealed in that dark brew, The hidden potential, of what it can do, From
death's remnants, creations arise, An alchemist's dance, where magic implies.
So, let us pause, in this grim tableau, Reflect on life's cycles, ebb, and flow, For in the Knacker
wagon's solemn plight, We find beauty born, from the darkest night.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The Old man told me long ago Hard work ,Keep your bowls open and trust in God

Poem.

In days of old, a wise man spoke, His words adorned with wisdom's cloak, "Keep your bowls open," he kindly said, "And trust in God, where'er you tread."

With eyes of age, he gazed ahead, A life well-lived, each line he read, His voice a gentle, guiding breeze, Whispering secrets, wisdom's keys.

"Keep your bowls open," he did repeat, A message simple, yet so complete, For in our hearts, abundance lies, When open vessels, we realize.

Let not fear seal our tender hearts, Nor greed obstruct life's gracious arts, But open wide to give and share, The blessings found in love's sweet lair.

And trust in God, the old man claimed, For in divine hands, we're gently framed, When shadows cast their daunting might, His grace shall guide us through the night.

In darkest hours, when doubts arise, And storms obscure hope's endless skies, Have faith in God, a steadfast rock, Who lifts us up from life's cruel knock.

For He is there, both near and far, The guiding light, our guiding star, In every step, in every choice, He whispers softly, hears our voice.

So heed those words from long ago, Embrace the wisdom they bestow, Keep your bowls open, hearts aglow, And trust in God, wherever you go.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottoings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The Parkers of Extwistle

The Parkers of Extwistle were an ancient Lancashire family with a long and storied history. Their origins were shrouded in obscurity, but according to Sr. Whitaker's History of Whalley, it was speculated that their lineage could be traced back to a keeper of Ightenhil named John Parcour de Hightenhul. Over time, the name became hereditary, and the Parkers of Extwistle emerged.

The family's presence in the historical records dates back to the 15th century. A William Parker is mentioned in 1409, during the reign of Henry IV, and a John Parker of Extwistle is recorded in 1429, during the reign of Henry VI. These early Parkers were likely lessees under the Abbey of Newbo.

As the centuries passed, the Parkers of Extwistle began to intermarry with prominent families in the area, cementing their connections to the local gentry. Edward Tempest of Yellison married Jane, the daughter of John Parker of Extwistle. Thomas Lister, Esq., of Arnoldsbiggin, married Elizabeth, another daughter of John Parker. The Parkers also married into families like the Towneleys of Royle, the Bannisters of Cuerden, and the Parkers of Browsholme, solidifying their descent from illustrious lineages in northern England.

The Parkers of Extwistle remained loyal to the Stuart dynasty during the tumultuous times of political unrest. Their allegiance to the Stuarts often led them into trouble with opposing factions.

During the siege of Skipton Castle by the Roundheads, a party raided Briercliffe and Extwistle, targeting supporters of the Royal cause. In response, Mr. Parker of Extwistle Hall swiftly hid away their cattle and valuables, foiling the marauders' attempts to plunder their property. Although the raiders tried to set fire to the hall, they were forced to flee, resulting in minimal damage.

In the year 1701, several leading Jacobins formed an intriguing institution with political undertones. Masquerading as a convivial and jolly group, they established a mock corporate body known as the Mayor and Corporation of Walton, located near Preston. The meetings took place at a small public house called the "Unicorn," and their activities were conducted with whimsical formality. The group possessed a register documenting their activities, as well as ceremonial items such as a mace, a sword of state, and four large silver-covered staves. One of these staves, inscribed with the words "The gift of Bannister Parker of Extwistle, Esq., for the use of the Corporation of Walton, 1721," was donated by a member named Bannister Parker. Each staff featured engraved names of the Mayor and other officers of this peculiar self-made corporation. However, with the rebellion of 1745 and the loss of its key members, the institution gradually faded away, and its register and staves eventually came into the possession of Sir Henry Hoghton, Bart., before finding their way to Cuerden Hall.

Legends and ghostly tales also surrounded the Parkers of Extwistle. Captain Robert Parker, one of the bailiffs inscribed on the staff of the mock corporation, allegedly witnessed a spectral funeral procession passing through the gate between Extwistle Hall and the Old Tithe House. In the dead of night, the eerie procession moved silently, and on the coffin, Captain Parker saw his own name inscribed. These supernatural occurrences added an air of mystery to the family's already intriguing history.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The Pendle Academy of Witchcraft and Wizardry

Once upon a time, nestled within the enchanting hills of Pendle, there stood a magnificent institution known as the Pendle Academy of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Hidden from the prying eyes of ordinary folk, this magical school served as a haven for young witches and wizards eager to unravel the secrets of the arcane arts.

The Pendle Academy was steeped in history, its ancient walls resonating with the knowledge passed down through generations. For centuries, it had been a sanctuary where magic thrived and was nurtured. As the moon cast its shimmering glow over the sprawling campus, the school came alive with the whispers of spells and the crackle of magical energy.

At the helm of the academy was Headmistress Seraphina Blackthorn, a formidable and wise witch who possessed a deep understanding of the mystical arts. Her presence commanded respect and admiration from students and teachers alike. Under her guidance, the academy had flourished, earning a reputation as one of the most prestigious magical institutions in the land.

Every year, aspiring witches and wizards from far and wide awaited the acceptance letters from the Pendle Academy. Among them was young Olivia Evergreen, a bright and spirited girl with a natural affinity for magic. Olivia's heart danced with joy when the coveted letter arrived, bearing the wax seal of the academy. She couldn't contain her excitement as she prepared to embark on her magical journey.

On the first day of term, Olivia entered the grand entrance hall, her eyes wide with wonder. She marveled at the sight of students bustling about, books floating and magical creatures darting from corner to corner. The air buzzed with anticipation as the Sorting Ceremony commenced, and students were placed into their respective houses—Astera, the house of stars; Embera, the house of flames; Solara, the house of sunlight; and Aqualis, the house of water.

Olivia found herself sorted into Aqualis, a house renowned for producing skilled water enchanters and healers. In her housemates, she discovered a sense of camaraderie and a shared passion for the fluid arts of magic. Under the guidance of their caring and knowledgeable professors, Olivia and her fellow Aqualis students dove deep into the mysteries of water manipulation, discovering the intricacies of spellcasting and the delicate balance of nature's elements.

As the years passed, Olivia grew more confident in her magical abilities. She excelled in her studies and forged lasting friendships with students from other houses. The Pendle Academy fostered an atmosphere of unity, encouraging students to learn from one another and appreciate the diverse range of magical talents.

Beyond the academic pursuits, the academy provided a myriad of extracurricular activities. From Quidditch matches that soared high in the sky to enchanting musical performances and dramatic productions, the students reveled in the vibrant tapestry of magical life. The annual Witches' and Wizards' Ball was a highlight of the social calendar, where laughter, music, and enchantment filled the air as students danced the night away.

Yet, not everything at Pendle Academy was filled with mirth and wonder. There were dark and dangerous secrets that lay dormant, remnants of a time when dark magic threatened the world. The academy remained vigilant, instilling in its students a sense of responsibility to protect and preserve the delicate equilibrium of the magical realm.

In their final year, Olivia and her classmates faced their greatest challenge—an ancient curse that had befallen the academy. Shadows crept through the hallowed halls, draining the life force of the academy and its inhabitants. The students rallied together, combining their knowledge, talents, and courage to confront the darkness.

Under Headmistress Seraphina's guidance, Olivia and her friends embarked on a perilous quest to unravel the curse's origin and restore the academy's .

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

THE REEVE EDGE INN

Deep in the heart of the rugged Pennine Range, nestled amidst the heather and bracken, stood the remnants of the Reeve Edge Inn. Once a bustling wayside refuge for weary travelers, it now lay in ruins, its glory days long gone. The inn's timeworn stones were overtaken by a lush green blanket of nature, a silent testament to its forgotten past.

Seventy years had passed since the inn's demise on a wild and stormy night, succumbing to decay and abandonment. The construction of better roads in the Todmorden valley diverted the course of commerce, rendering the once-thriving inn obsolete. Though time had left its mark, some of the weathered stones found new purpose in the fences encircling the nearby pasture. The inn's final tenant, William Lee, hailed from a long line of ancestors rooted in the region. His family's legacy intermingled with the stories of the land. A weathered oak kist at Jerusalem Farm bore his initials, a relic from William's time as the inn's last landlord.

The inn took its name from the "Reeve Edge," a rocky hill crowned with massive blocks of millstone grit that stretched from north to south, pointing toward Swindean waterhead. In bygone years, the cottages of Briercliffe, Extwistle, and Trawden bustled with the creation of huckabacks, bockins, and bombazines—sturdy fabrics crafted by local weavers. These goods, loaded onto packhorses, traversed the treacherous moors, bound for the bustling emporium of Halifax.

The perilous journey across Widdup Head, plagued by footpads and robbers, prompted weavers to gather at the Reeve Edge Inn. Their mutual protection became essential as they awaited a sufficient number to join forces and brave the treacherous paths together. Many a wrongdoer met their downfall under the shadow of York's ancient fortress, their crimes fading from memory over time, particularly for those living on the Yorkshire side of the Pennine Range. Amongst these forgotten tales, one incident stands out, witnessed by a passive observer from the local community. In a secluded valley enveloped by desolate moors, "The Greave" farmhouse stood as a solitary abode. Old Binn o' Withams, a skilled joiner and hand-loom maker from Lane Bottom, had been enlisted to undertake repairs on the farm buildings.

One fateful day, as the noon hour approached, Binn sat at the table alongside the farmer and his family, enjoying a simple meal. Suddenly, a gang of robbers, their faces concealed by soot, burst into the house. Engaging in a hasty plunder, they ransacked drawers and boxes, seizing whatever money they could find. Satisfied with their spoils, they prepared to depart when the farmer uttered a rash statement: "I know you, and you'll suffer for this."

Those words proved fatal. The robbers swiftly turned back, snatching the farmer's gun from the wall. Without hesitation, they loaded it before his horrified gaze and extinguished his life, leaving a tragic scene in their wake. Old Binn, frozen in his seat, bore witness to this gruesome act, his heart heavy with the weight of the unspeakable tragedy.

Despite the passage of time, the identities of the murderers remained a mystery. Rumors swirled that the same gang had been apprehended for another crime, and one of them purportedly confessed to being part of the fatal encounter at The Greave. The man met his demise in exile in Botany Bay, his name—Britcliffe—a direct descendant of the illustrious Briercliffes of Briercliffe,

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The spirits of the Pendle witches came for Christmas Barley Methodist Church, Barley, Lancashire,

The atmosphere in Barley Methodist Church was filled with anticipation as the spirits of the Pendle witches prepared for a unique Christmas gathering. Having formed a connection with some of the locals over time, they decided to invite them over for a special dinner. Despite the late hour, darkness had descended upon the village when the guests arrived.

The old church, nestled amidst the picturesque landscape of Barley, Lancashire, had become a meeting place for the spirits of the Pendle witches. Known for their infamous history, they had long since shed their reputation for malevolence and found solace in the afterlife. Now, they sought to celebrate the joyous occasion of Christmas with their newfound friends.

As the guests entered the church, they were greeted by an ethereal glow emanating from the flickering candles and warm hearth. The spirits, clad in tattered garments reminiscent of their past lives, welcomed their friends with open arms and kind smiles. There was an air of mystery and reverence as they took their seats around the elaborately decorated table.

The dinner spread before them was a feast fit for kings. Traditional Christmas fare adorned the table, including succulent roast turkey, fragrant spiced ham, roasted vegetables, and a plethora of mouthwatering desserts. The spirits had conjured up a bountiful meal, using their supernatural powers to create a culinary experience like no other.

Laughter and conversation filled the air as the spirits and their mortal guests shared stories and bonded over the joy of the season. The spirits regaled their friends with tales of their trials and tribulations, offering glimpses into the history of the Pendle witches that had long fascinated the locals. Their stories were not of evil, but of resilience and perseverance in the face of adversity. Outside the church, the cold winter wind howled, but inside, the warmth and camaraderie created a sanctuary of love and acceptance. The spirits of the Pendle witches had found a sense of belonging, and in turn, had extended that sense of belonging to their mortal friends.

As the night wore on, the spirits unveiled small, handmade gifts for each of their guests. These tokens of appreciation were imbued with the spirits' energy, carrying a touch of their otherworldly essence. The gifts held a deep significance, symbolizing the bonds forged between the spirits and the people of Barley.

With hearts full of gratitude and joy, the spirits and their guests stood together and raised a toast to the spirit of Christmas and the enduring power of friendship. In that moment, the boundaries between the mortal world and the supernatural faded away, leaving only the shared warmth and love that connected them all.

As the night drew to a close, the spirits bid farewell to their friends, promising to reunite in the following year. With a final embrace and a twinkle in their eyes, the spirits vanished into the night, leaving behind the echoes of laughter and the spirit of Christmas that would forever linger in the hearts of the people of Barley.

And so, the tale of the spirits of the Pendle witches and their extraordinary Christmas gathering became a cherished legend, passed down through generations, reminding everyone of the power of compassion, forgiveness, and the magic that can be found in the unlikeliest of places.

By Donald Jay.

The three Burnley lock ups

For such a small town (with a population of little more than 70,000 people today) it is surprising that Burnley required not just one town lock up but three.

The main lock up, situated in the old town police station, was converted from a former Methodist Church situated off Nairne Street and contained just three cells. It was here that the dangerous child murderer Joseph Wren was held before he was brought to trial.

The second was opened in 1819 behind the famous Swan Inn, a large and popular pub that opened late in the 1700s and once housed a town committee (the forerunner of the Burnley Town Council) which met there up until 1844.

Like the lock up in Nairne Street, this one housed very few cells but was built to replace the third Burnley Lock Up, located further out of the town in Nelson.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

The Titanic is a grave site not a place for the rich to go there and use it as a play area the the dead there rest in peace and stop all diving on the Titanic site

Poem.

In the depths of the ocean, a story unfolds, A tragic tale of a vessel, once mighty and bold. The Titanic, her name etched in history's pages, A haunting reminder of the past's lingering stages. Beneath the waves, where darkness resides, A grave site lies dormant, where the wreckage hides. But some souls fail to understand the weight, Of this solemn place, where destinies met their fate.

Oh, let not the wealthy, with hearts void of care, Descend upon this hallowed ground, unaware. For it is not a playground, a mere tourist attraction, But a final resting place, demanding our compassion.

The Titanic holds secrets, stories untold, Of lives that were shattered, of dreams put on hold. Their echoes still linger in the ocean's embrace, Whispering tales of sorrow, longing, and grace. Let the spirits find solace in eternal sleep, Unburdened by prying eyes that seek to peep. Respect their slumber, their eternal repose, And honor their memory, as the sea wind blows.

For the Titanic is more than just a sunken ship, It's a testament to humanity's mortal grip. In its depths, a lesson we must learn and heed, To treat history's relics with the reverence they need. So, cease the diving, the intrusion, the play, Let the Titanic rest in peace, undisturbed, we pray. May her legacy endure, a reminder profound, That even in tragedy, our humanity can be found.
By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The Toad at Nelson Cleansing Department,

Once upon a time in the quaint town of Nelson, there lived a man named Robert. However, he was more commonly known by his nickname, Toad. Toad worked diligently in the Nelson Cleansing Department, where he played a vital role in keeping the streets clean and tidy. His specific duty was to operate the Gully wagon, a large vehicle used to collect waste and debris from the gutters.

Toad's faithful companion on his daily route was the wagon's driver, Walter. Walter was a cheerful and lively fellow who had a peculiar trait - his speech was quite difficult to comprehend.

Despite his occasional communication challenges, Walter's dedication and love for his job were unmatched.

Wherever Walter went, he had a little companion by his side—a small dog who shared his every adventure. The tiny pup, whose name was yet unknown, was Walter's constant source of joy and comfort. No matter how bumpy the roads were or how foul the odors, the dog's wagging tail and adorable antics always managed to bring a smile to the faces of Toad and Walter.

Together, Toad and Walter formed an unstoppable team. As the Gully wagon trundled through the streets, Toad skillfully maneuvered it to capture every speck of dirt and rubbish, while Walter guided him through his muddled but enthusiastic instructions. Passersby often found themselves amused by their unique collaboration, admiring their perseverance and camaraderie. Despite the challenges presented by Walter's speech impediment, the people of Nelson respected and appreciated him. They understood that his heart was in the right place, and his dedication to his job surpassed any limitations he faced in expressing himself. The community recognized Walter's unwavering commitment to maintaining the town's cleanliness, and they held him in high regard.

Toad, with his friendly nature and willingness to adapt to any situation, quickly became the town's unofficial ambassador for the Cleansing Department. His jovial personality and catchy nickname endeared him to the locals, who often greeted him with a cheerful, "Hello, Toad!" The bond between Toad, Walter, and their furry companion grew stronger with each passing day.

Together, they braved the streets, tackling dirt, grime, and the occasional unpredictable mess. Their shared experiences and triumphs became legendary tales that would be passed down through generations.

In the end, it wasn't just about their job or their individual challenges—it was about the unity and resilience they displayed. Toad, the hardworking nickname for Robert, and Walter, the driver with the difficult speech, proved that with determination and a touch of humor, any obstacle could be overcome.

And so, their story remained etched in the hearts of the townspeople, reminding them of the power of friendship, acceptance, and the extraordinary achievements that could be attained by working together, even when faced with adversity.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

The Transport cafe.

In the heart of the English countryside, nestled beside a winding road, stood a humble transport cafe. With its faded sign and worn-out facade, it had been a beacon for weary travelers and lorry drivers for decades. The cafe, aptly named "The Roadside Stop," was a place where people from all walks of life converged.

Early each morning, as the first rays of sunlight peeked through the horizon, the clattering of dishes and the sizzling of griddles echoed within the cafe's walls. Fred, the cafe's owner, was a stout man with a perpetual smile. He had inherited the business from his father and had dedicated his life to serving the hungry souls on the road.

As the doors swung open, a wave of fragrant aromas welcomed the customers. The air was thick with the scent of freshly brewed tea and the tantalizing sizzle of bacon on the grill. The interior of the cafe was filled with worn wooden tables and mismatched chairs, each one telling its own story of countless conversations and shared moments.

Lorry drivers, clad in worn-out jackets and grease-stained overalls, settled into their usual spots. They shared stories of the long roads they had traveled, the adventures they had encountered, and the beauty they had witnessed through their windshields. Their camaraderie, forged by the shared experiences of a nomadic lifestyle, was the lifeblood of The Roadside Stop.

Amidst the hearty laughter and jovial banter, trade union representatives could be seen, engaging in discussions with the drivers. They fought for fair working conditions, better wages, and a stronger sense of unity among the transport workers. The cafe became a hub of communication, a place where drivers could find solace and support, and where their voices could be heard.

The menu at The Roadside Stop was simple yet satisfying. Breakfast was a feast fit for champions, featuring the renowned full cooked breakfast. It boasted a medley of mouthwatering components, including fried eggs, crispy bacon, black pudding, bubble and squeak, hash browns, baked beans, grilled tomatoes, and of course, a steaming mug of strong tea. The aroma alone was enough to make the heartiest of appetites growl.

Throughout the day, the cafe served an array of meals to appease any hunger. From steaming steak and kidney pies to traditional roast dinners, each dish was prepared with care and passion. And for dessert, the customers indulged in warm apple crumbles topped with a generous dollop of custard, savoring the comforting flavors that reminded them of home.

The Roadside Stop was a sanctuary for the road-weary. It provided nourishment not only for their bodies but also for their spirits. As the sun set on another day, drivers bid farewell to their newfound friends, promising to meet again at their next stop.

The transport cafe was more than just a place to refuel and replenish. It was a hub of connection, a testament to the resilience and solidarity of those who traversed the country's highways.

Through the clatter of dishes, the shared meals, and the comforting aroma of tea, The Roadside Stop had become a home away from home, where hearts were warmed and stories were shared, one cup of tea at a time.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

THE TUMULI ON BEARDLEY HILL

In the heart of the British Isles, nestled amidst the rolling landscapes, lay the remnants of an ancient house on the crest of Beardley Hill. It stood as a silent witness to the mysteries that unfolded in its surroundings. The hill itself was adorned with enigmatic circular tumuli, raised mounds of earth that whispered tales of forgotten times.

According to local lore, the name "Beardley Hill" bore the echoes of a long-ago conflict. Its etymology traced back to the Saxon words "Beado," meaning battle, and "ley," signifying a field.

Thus, it was known as the "Battlefield." The hill and its tumuli were believed to be tied to an epic clash of warriors from ancient days.

Many speculated that these primitive mounds, scattered across the landscape, hailed from the enigmatic Celtic era. They were thought to be sepulchral monuments erected to honor a revered chieftain or to serve as the final resting place for fallen heroes who had perished on the battlefield. These humble mounds held secrets buried deep within their earthen embrace.

In the rugged expanse of the Pennine Range, where the wild and barren terrain stretched as far as the eye could see, the names of mountains, rocks, and streams all bore witness to the ancient inhabitants of Britain. It was as if the land itself had absorbed their stories, preserving them in the very fabric of its being. Though civilizations rose and fell, and cities crumbled into dust, these enduring remnants of the past stood strong—a testament to the indomitable spirit of those who came before.

Curiosity stirred within the hearts of those who beheld Beardley Hill and its surrounding tumuli. Scholars, historians, and archeologists ventured to uncover the secrets concealed beneath the ancient soil. They painstakingly excavated the mounds, unearthing relics and remains that painted a vivid picture of the past.

The whispers of history gradually came to life. Artifacts revealed intricate Celtic designs, weapons once wielded with bravery, and ornaments that spoke of a rich and vibrant culture. The fallen warriors, who had long since been lost to time, were now given a voice—an opportunity to share their stories with the present.

As the world awakened to the revelations from Beardley Hill, a sense of awe and reverence settled upon those who sought to understand the past. The tales of battles fought and lives laid to rest served as a reminder of the human experience that transcended the boundaries of time. The mounds, once seen as mere hillocks, became symbols of resilience and remembrance, inviting contemplation and connection with those who had gone before.

Today, Beardley Hill stands as a testament to the unyielding passage of time, a bridge between forgotten eras and the present. It reminds us that as we traverse the tapestry of history, our footsteps leave indelible imprints upon the land. The tumuli, those ancient guardians of the past, stand tall, inviting us to listen closely—to hear the echoes of battles fought, the whispers of fallen heroes, and the quiet triumph of the human spirit that endures throughout the ages.

By Donald Jay

A tumulus (plural tumuli) is a mound of earth and stones raised over a grave or graves. Tumuli are also known as barrows, burial mounds or *kurgans*, and may be found throughout much of the world. A cairn, which is a mound of stones built for various purposes, may also originally have been a tumulus.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

In the heart of Lancashire's Burnley Coalfield, deep beneath the surface, lay a hidden realm known as Moorfield. It was a place of mystery and enchantment, where magical beings roamed and legends came to life.

Among these fantastical creatures was the Knocker, a mischievous gnome-like being. The Knocker, also known as the Knacker, was a diminutive figure standing only 2 feet tall. It possessed a disproportionately large head, long arms, wrinkled skin, and a magnificent set of white whiskers. Donning a miniature miner's garb, the Knocker was known for its playful antics and love for pranks.

Miners who toiled in the depths of the Burnley Coalfield often encountered the mischievous Knocker. It would stealthily make its way through the tunnels, waiting for the perfect opportunity to strike. Unattended tools and food were its favorite targets, disappearing in the blink of an eye, much to the dismay of the hardworking miners.

One day, deep within the Reedley Mine, a young miner named Tom ventured into the dark recesses of the tunnel. He had heard tales of the Knocker's exploits and was both curious and apprehensive. As he trudged along, his lantern casting eerie shadows on the walls, he felt a peculiar presence nearby.

Tom's heart raced as he glimpsed a fleeting figure darting in and out of the shadows. It was the Knocker, its wrinkled face beaming with mischief. Sensing the miner's fear, the mischievous creature decided to reveal itself.

"Be not afraid, young one," the Knocker spoke, its voice resonating with an otherworldly charm.

"I mean no harm, but rather seek to bring laughter to the depths of these mines."

Tom cautiously approached the Knocker, his curiosity overpowering his initial fear. "Why do you play these tricks on us miners?" he asked, his voice tinged with both annoyance and intrigue. The Knocker's eyes twinkled mischievously. "For centuries, I have watched as men toil and sweat in these dark tunnels. I bring a moment of respite, a flicker of joy amidst the toil. Life is too short not to revel in the simple pleasures, my friend."

Tom pondered the Knocker's words, realizing the truth in them. The arduous work of the miners often left them weary and burdened, in need of a lighthearted distraction. Perhaps the Knocker's pranks were a way of reminding them to find joy in the midst of hardship.

From that day forward, Tom and the Knocker formed an unlikely bond. The little creature would continue its playful antics, but always in good spirits. It would leave small tokens of appreciation for the miners, hidden treasures and notes of encouragement, brightening their days in the dark mines.

The legend of the Knocker spread throughout the Burnley Coalfield, becoming a symbol of resilience and camaraderie. The miners, no longer fearing its tricks, embraced the creature as a guardian of their spirits, a reminder to find laughter in even the darkest of places.

And so, the Knocker's legacy endured, weaving its way into the rich tapestry of Lancashire folklore. Even today, as the Burnley Coalfield lies dormant, the spirit of the mischievous gnome-like creature lives on, a symbol of the indomitable human spirit and the power of a shared smile in the face of adversity.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle/

Once upon a time in the small town of Nelson, there lived a young apprentice plumber named Jimmy. He was known for his dedication and willingness to take on any job that came his way. Little did he know that one particular job would earn him a unique nickname and a story that would be told for years to come.

One sunny morning, Jimmy and his fellow plumbers received a call from the Nelson Council. They were tasked with converting an old-fashioned long drop toilet into a modern flush toilet. Excited to tackle the project, they gathered their tools and set off to the location.

Upon their arrival, they discovered an unexpected surprise. A small cat had somehow found its way into the depths of the long drop toilet and was trapped. Concerned for the feline's safety, Jimmy and his colleagues immediately sprung into action. With careful maneuvering and a bit of patience, they managed to rescue the frightened cat from its unsavory predicament.

However, the cat's ordeal was far from over. Covered in unsightly remnants from its journey down the toilet, the poor creature desperately needed a bath. Without hesitation, Jimmy volunteered to clean the cat and provide it with some much-needed comfort.

As Jimmy gingerly approached the cat, he tried his best to calm the frightened feline. The cat, understandably terrified, reacted by scratching Jimmy in multiple places. Despite the scratches and the pain, Jimmy persisted, understanding the importance of helping the animal. With gentle hands and a warm heart, he carefully washed away the filth, making sure to keep the cat as comfortable as possible.

After the cleansing ordeal, the cat emerged looking cleaner and happier than before. It seemed grateful for Jimmy's act of kindness, rubbing against his leg as a sign of appreciation. Word of the incident quickly spread throughout the town, and Jimmy's courageous act became the talk of the community.

From that day forward, Jimmy became known as "Jimmy Cat Washer." The townspeople admired his compassion and bravery in rescuing and cleaning the trapped feline. Even though he had scratches to remind him of the encounter, Jimmy wore his newfound nickname with pride. In addition to his plumbing skills, Jimmy had another passion in life—he was an amateur radio operator. He spent his free time tinkering with radios, connecting with people from around the world, and expanding his knowledge of the technology.

While his nickname "Jimmy Cat Washer" stuck, he continued to pursue his plumbing apprenticeship and eventually became a skilled plumber. The Bedlington terriers he owned for years brought him joy and companionship, and he treasured their loyalty.

As the years went by, Jimmy's reputation grew not only for his plumbing expertise but also for his selflessness and empathy towards animals. He would often go out of his way to rescue stray cats and dogs, finding them loving homes or caring for them himself. Jimmy's acts of kindness extended beyond just the realm of plumbing, leaving a lasting impact on both the people and animals of Nelson.

The story of "Jimmy Cat Washer" became a legendary tale in Nelson, reminding everyone that acts of compassion, no matter how small, can make a significant difference in the lives of others. And as for Jimmy, he continued to embrace his nickname, proudly sharing the story of the cat in the long drop toilet and the unexpected adventure that changed his life forever.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Thomas Potts, the clerk to the Lancaster Assizes must now answer to God for consciously omitting significant details of the court proceedings.

Thomas Potts, the diligent clerk to the Lancaster Assizes, sat at his desk, quill in hand, ready to document the proceedings of the infamous witch trials. It was the year 1612, and the air was heavy with superstition and fear. Potts knew that his task was not only to record the events but also to shape the narrative, presenting a version of the truth that would satisfy the judges and the public.

As the trials commenced, Potts observed the accused men and women, their faces etched with anxiety and despair. Among them were the Pendle witches and the Samlesbury witches, individuals believed to have made pacts with the devil and engaged in malevolent sorcery. The fate of these accused souls hung in the balance, and Potts was determined to capture every detail. However, Potts was not a neutral observer. He was an "active and selective reporter," consciously omitting significant details of the court proceedings. His aim was not to provide an objective account but to present a narrative that supported the prevailing beliefs of the time. He withheld crucial information, such as the fact that all indictments were initially examined by a grand jury, responsible for determining whether there was sufficient evidence to proceed with a trial.

The grand jury's role was vital in ensuring a fair and just legal process. Yet, Potts omitted this step, choosing to focus solely on the trial itself, where the accused faced a petty jury. This selective reporting painted the accused in a more sinister light, as if they were already presumed guilty before their trial had even begun.

Nevertheless, Potts diligently recorded the testimonies and arguments presented in the courtroom. He captured the fear in the eyes of the witnesses as they spoke of bewitchments and curses. He detailed the words of the accused, desperately denying their involvement in dark magic. Potts was aware of the weight his words would carry, and he carefully crafted each sentence to evoke fear and validate the public's beliefs in witchcraft.

Weeks passed, and the trials concluded. Eleven individuals were found guilty and condemned to death, their lives to be taken by the hangman's noose. One person faced the humiliation of standing in the pillory, enduring the scorn of the crowd. The remaining accused, fortunate enough to escape conviction, were acquitted, though their lives would never be the same.

Potts completed his account, "The Wonderfull Discoverie of Witches in the Countie of Lancaster," on that chilly November day in 1612. He submitted his manuscript to the judges, Sir James Altham and Sir Edward Bromley, who reviewed and revised it before its publication the following year. Bromley declared it to be "truly reported" and "fit and worthie to be published." And so, Potts' narrative became one of the most famous and widely circulated records of witch trials in the 17th century. It perpetuated the beliefs and fears surrounding witchcraft, contributing to the continued persecution of those accused of sorcery.

Years later, as society progressed and attitudes shifted, the inaccuracies and biases in Potts' account would be scrutinized. Historians would challenge the validity of his omissions and question the true extent of the accused's guilt. But for now, in the early 17th century, Thomas Potts' version of events stood as the accepted truth—a testament to the power of storytelling and the selective nature of history.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Thomas Street Bowling Green. Nelson Ghostly Bowl's

In the small town of Nelson, nestled amidst rolling hills and quaint cottages, there stood a place that held a century's worth of history and memories: Thomas Street Bowling Green. For generations, it had been a gathering spot for the locals, a place where laughter and friendly competition filled the air. However, as time marched on, the old men who once graced the green with their skilled hands and keen eyes began to pass away, one by one.

Yet, even in death, their spirits seemed unwilling to abandon the place that held so many cherished moments. The people of Nelson spoke in hushed whispers about the spectral presence that haunted the Thomas Street Bowling Green. On moonlit nights, when the world slept soundly, the ethereal figures of the old men could be seen, playing their beloved crown green bowls as though time had ceased to exist.

One chilly autumn evening, a curious young woman named Emma found herself drawn to the tales that echoed through the town. She had always been fascinated by the supernatural, and the ghostly stories of the bowling green intrigued her greatly. With a mixture of excitement and trepidation, she decided to venture into the realm of the paranormal and experience the mystery firsthand.

As the clock struck midnight, Emma arrived at Thomas Street Bowling Green, the crisp air sending shivers down her spine. The old green, bathed in moonlight, looked hauntingly beautiful, its once-vibrant grass now fading with age. Emma stood at the edge, her heart pounding in her chest, her eyes fixed on the empty space where the games were said to unfold.

Suddenly, a gentle breeze swept through the night, carrying with it a soft, melodic laughter that echoed through the stillness. Emma's eyes widened as she watched the faint apparitions materialize before her. Transparent figures, their forms blurred like memories, stood upon the green, their expressions filled with joy and camaraderie.

The old men played with grace and skill, their ghostly bowls gliding across the green as though guided by invisible hands. Their laughter intermingled with the rustling leaves, creating a haunting symphony that spoke of a love for the game that transcended the boundary between life and death.

Emma's initial fear gave way to awe and reverence as she witnessed the beauty of the spectral gathering. There was something profoundly touching about the way these restless souls clung to the place they had cherished in life. They had found solace in their shared passion, and even in death, they refused to let go.

Night after night, Emma returned to the bowling green, quietly observing the spectral games, each one a poignant reminder of the passage of time. She felt a deep connection with the old men, as though they were guiding her, teaching her lessons that extended far beyond the boundaries of the green. Their determination, their love for the game, taught her the value of embracing life's fleeting moments and finding joy in the simplest of pleasures.

As the years went by, the stories of the ghostly bowling games continued to enchant the people of Nelson. The town's residents no longer feared the apparitions that graced Thomas Street Bowling Green; instead, they celebrated the enduring spirits that held the green in their eternal embrace.

Emma, now an old woman herself, sat on a bench near the bowling green, her eyes twinkling with memories. She watched as a new generation of bowlers took to the green, their youthful enthusiasm mingling with the whispers of the past. And in the soft breeze that brushed against her cheek, she could almost hear the laughter of the old men, forever etched in the hallowed grounds of Thomas Street Bowling Green.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

Unusual snack people remember from childhood in Lancashire

In the heart of Lancashire, where the rolling hills meet the bustling towns, there lies a culinary delight that has stood the test of time. It is a snack that holds a special place in the hearts of those who grew up in the region, a taste that instantly transports them back to their carefree childhood days. This beloved treat is none other than the humble banana sandwich.

Decades ago, when families had to make their food stretch and get creative with their meals, the banana sandwich emerged as a simple yet satisfying option. It became a staple part of growing up for many in Lancashire and beyond. The preparation was simple: take two slices of bread, generously spread them with butter, and top it all off with finely chopped or mashed bananas. The combination of the creamy fruit and the rich, comforting taste of buttered bread created a harmony of flavors that delighted both young and old.

As time went on, people began to experiment with different variations of the banana sandwich. Some added a sprinkle of sugar to enhance the sweetness, while others slathered on peanut butter for an extra layer of richness. The sandwich evolved into a canvas for personal creativity and taste preferences. For some, it was all about the crunch, and they would add a handful of plain crisps for a delightful texture contrast. Salad cream, jam, crumbled flake, honey, and even a drizzle of milk found their way into the mix, each adding its own unique twist to this childhood classic.

The banana sandwich was not limited to mealtimes alone; it became a snack enjoyed throughout the day. Whether it was a quick breakfast on a busy morning or a satisfying afternoon treat, the sandwich found its place in the hearts and bellies of Lancashire's residents. Even Elvis Presley, the King of Rock and Roll, was known to be a fan of the peanut butter and banana sandwich, elevating its status to legendary proportions.

Years passed, and the love for the banana sandwich never waned. Its presence remained a constant reminder of simpler times, of shared moments with family and friends. As adults, those who grew up with this beloved snack still indulged in its comforting embrace, savoring every bite and relishing the nostalgia it brought.

In Lancashire, the chapter on the banana sandwich is far from closed. It continues to be a treat enjoyed by many, a reminder of cherished memories and the enduring bond between food and childhood. Whether it is mashed with peanut butter and honey, sprinkled with sugar, or grilled with bacon, the banana sandwich remains a timeless symbol of joy and connection in the hearts of Lancashire's people.

So, the next time you find yourself reminiscing about your childhood in Lancashire, take a moment to recreate this simple delight. Grab a ripe banana, slice some bread, and let the memories flood back as you savor the familiar taste of the beloved banana sandwich.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

Wallace Hartley. visitors to Colne cemetery have claimed to hear ghostly sounds of a solo violin playing near Hartley's resting place and have detected a strong smell of the sea

Wallace Hartley was indeed a notable figure who is remembered for his bravery and musical talent aboard the RMS Titanic. Born on June 2, 1878, in Colne, Lancashire, England, Hartley displayed an early aptitude for music and became proficient in playing the violin. He gained recognition for his skills and began performing solo violin concerts at a young age.

Eventually, Wallace Hartley secured a position as the bandmaster on the luxurious ocean liner, the Titanic. The ship embarked on its maiden voyage from Southampton, England, on April 10, 1912. Tragically, just four days into the voyage, on April 14, the Titanic struck an iceberg and sank in the North Atlantic Ocean, resulting in the loss of over 1,500 lives.

Hartley and his band members famously played music on the deck of the ship, providing solace and comfort to passengers amidst the chaos and impending disaster. According to witness accounts, Hartley and his band continued to play until the very end, as the Titanic descended beneath the waves.

Following the sinking of the Titanic, Hartley's body was recovered by the cable ship Mackay-Bennett on April 26, 1912. He was found with his violin case strapped to his body. Hartley's remains were brought back to his hometown of Colne, where a large crowd gathered to pay their respects during his funeral procession. The funeral took place on May 18, 1912, and an estimated 40,000 people lined the streets to honor his memory.

To commemorate Wallace Hartley's heroic actions and musical legacy, a memorial was erected in his honor on Albert Road in Colne. The memorial serves as a tribute to his bravery and the enduring memory of the Titanic's tragic voyage. Some reports suggest that visitors to Colne cemetery have claimed to hear ghostly sounds of a solo violin playing near Hartley's resting place and have detected a strong smell of the sea, adding to the mystique surrounding his story. Wallace Hartley's life and his role as the bandmaster on the Titanic have captured the imagination of people around the world, symbolizing bravery and selflessness in the face of tragedy. His legacy serves as a reminder of the enduring power of music and the human spirit.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Whistling

In the quiet town of Bacup, nestled near Burnley Road, there existed a lane that held a mysterious secret. This unassuming path, known for its tranquil ambiance during the day, transformed into something altogether different when the sun dipped below the horizon. Legends whispered of a haunting manifestation that plagued those who dared to venture along its lonely stretch.

It was said that the haunting began with a faint sound—a gentle whistling that carried on the breeze. The tune, melancholic and haunting, seemed to echo from the shadows, captivating the curious and daring souls who dared to explore the enigmatic lane.

Many had tried to uncover the truth behind the whistling, wandering along the lane in both daylight and darkness. Some claimed to have heard the ethereal melody, while others dismissed it as mere superstition. But those who dismissed it were not privy to the true nature of the haunting.

As the whistling grew louder, it was inevitably followed by a presence—an unseen entity drawing closer with every step. The whistling would wane, replaced by a rhythmic pattern of heavy breathing that intensified as it approached. The air would grow thick with an unexplained heaviness, as if an invisible stranger stood right beside you, their breath tickling the nape of your neck.

The origin of these eerie sounds, as the legends had it, was a woman who had suffered the unimaginable pain of losing both her husband and child. Her heart shattered into a thousand pieces, forever condemning her to the lane where she met her tragic end.

The woman's sorrow became intertwined with the very fabric of the lane, leaving an imprint that transcended time and space. It was her yearning for her loved ones, trapped in the depths of her broken heart, that manifested itself in the haunting whistles and labored breaths.

It was a moonlit night when Emily, a local resident, summoned the courage to confront the chilling tale that had become synonymous with the lane. Armed with a lantern and a heart filled with empathy, she embarked on a journey to unravel the truth behind the haunting.

As Emily ventured into the darkness, the whistling began, accompanied by the all-too-familiar sounds of heavy breathing. Yet, this time, there was something different in the air—a sense of longing and sadness that tugged at her own heartstrings.

She continued onward, following the spectral sounds until she reached a small clearing. And there, bathed in moonlight, stood a dilapidated old cottage—the final resting place of the tormented soul. Its timeworn walls, once a refuge of love and happiness, now stood as a melancholic testament to the tragedy that had befallen the woman.

With each step she took, Emily felt the weight of grief surrounding her, but she remained undeterred. She approached the cottage, her voice trembling as she softly called out into the night.

"Dear lost soul, I can feel your pain. I understand the ache of a broken heart. But know this, you are not alone. Your loved ones may have left this world, but their spirits live on in your memories."

As her words floated into the night, a soft breeze rustled through the trees, carrying with it a sense of release. The whistling ceased, replaced by a profound stillness that seemed to fill the air.

And in that moment, Emily felt a sense of peace wash over her.

The haunting had finally found solace, the spirit of the broken-hearted woman released from the shackles of her grief. No longer bound to the lane, she could finally reunite with her loved ones, finding eternal peace in the realms beyond.

From that night forward, the lane near Burnley Road carried a different energy—a sense of serenity and healing. The once-haunted path became a place of reflection, where visitors could pay their respects to the woman who had suffered such profound loss. And so, the legend of the whistling lane lived on, reminding all who heard it of the power of love, the depths of grief, and the resilience of the human spirit.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

In the quiet town of Burnley, Lancashire, a mysterious walking stick held a forgotten tale. For years, it had remained hidden in the depths of a trunk belonging to an elderly neighbor who had long since passed away. Unbeknownst to anyone, this simple-looking walking stick held a secret history waiting to be unraveled.

One fateful day, as the trunk was being sorted through, the walking stick emerged from its resting place. Its surface was adorned with intricate designs, created with skilled poker work and delicate drawings in black, red, and green ink. Etched upon it were the initials "W H 1853" followed by the words: "WILLIAM HEAP MONK HALL BURNLEY LANCASHIRE."

Curiosity piqued, the discoverers examined the stick more closely, their eyes tracing the delicate lines and enchanting images that graced its surface. The depictions were varied and intriguing, displaying animals, enigmatic symbols that hinted at possible masonic affiliations, agricultural tools and scenes, and even a man and woman riding in a small cart. Yet, among them were several enigmatic objects that eluded identification.

At the base of the walking stick, a chilling sight awaited them—a skull and crossbones accompanied by an image of a person resting in a coffin. Questions flooded their minds. Could this walking stick hold a hidden narrative, perhaps telling the life story of a certain William Heap? Or was it crafted by William Heap himself, serving a different purpose altogether?

Seeking answers, the inquisitive individuals turned to their local community and the forum's family trees for guidance. They discovered a William Heap hailing from the Briercliffe area, but their hopes were momentarily dashed when they realized he had been born in 1846, not aligning with the engraved year on the walking stick.

Undeterred, they embarked on a journey through time, delving deeper into historical records and local archives. Slowly but surely, the pieces began to fall into place. They discovered that William Heap, the owner of Monk Hall in Burnley, had indeed lived during the mid-19th century. His life was filled with remarkable achievements and experiences, serving as a possible inspiration for the walking stick's intricate artwork.

As they further explored the family history, they stumbled upon connections to various organizations and fraternities that hinted at the symbols depicted on the walking stick. It became apparent that William Heap had been an active member of these groups, using his artistic talents to craft this extraordinary walking stick as a symbol of his own journey through life, intertwining personal experiences, professional endeavors, and affiliations with the enigmatic symbols and images etched upon its surface.

With each newfound discovery, the walking stick transformed from a mere forgotten heirloom into a testament of a life lived, a tangible embodiment of William Heap's unique story. The community marveled at the stick's significance, and its presence sparked renewed interest in local history and heritage.

The walking stick of William Heap now stood as a cherished artifact, bridging the

gap between the past and the present. It held within it the essence of a bygone era, reminding all who beheld it of the rich tapestry of human existence and the countless stories that lie waiting to be unearthed, even in the most unexpected of places.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle

Wolf Fell, Forest of Bowland, Lancashire.

In the heart of the Forest of Bowland, nestled amidst the rugged landscape, stood Wolf Fell—a place steeped in history and myth. It was said to be the last refuge of the wolves, the real wolves' house, or "woofus," as the locals called it. The wolves had long disappeared from the land, their presence reduced to tales passed down through generations.

Centuries ago, the Sherburne family ruled over the Wolf Hall estate, holding dominion over the land and its people. The Sherburnes maintained their control through feudal customs, with the tenants living around Saddle Fell bound by their lord's orders.

Time wore on, and the Wolf Hall Sherburnes fell from prominence. In 1680, the estate was sold to the Pattens, and in 1718, Sir Edward Stanley of Bickerstaffe leased Wolf Hall and its lands to a man named Henry Procter. The Procter family, known as the "Woofus" Procters, had arrived from Wyresdale and settled in the area.

Henry Procter, a hardworking and determined man, took on the lease of Wolf Hall and its surrounding farmlands. He had aspirations of making a prosperous life for himself and his family amidst the wild beauty of Wolf Fell. Henry's dedication and perseverance soon began to bear fruit.

Over the years, the Procter family established themselves as respected members of the community. They toiled on the land, tending to their crops and livestock, as well as operating the Wolfen Mill for grinding grain. The fields were filled with oats, wheat, rye, and barley, providing sustenance for both the family and the local breweries.

As generations passed, the Procter family's connection to Wolf Fell and the surrounding area deepened. They grew in number, their presence entwined with the land they called home. The winds that swept across the moors carried whispers of their history and their toil.

One particular member of the Procter family, Thomas Procter, had a deep fascination with the legends of the wolves. He was captivated by the stories of the wolves' presence on Wolf Fell, the howls echoing through the night and the majestic creatures roaming freely.

Thomas spent countless hours poring over the old records and tales, piecing together the fragments of the past. He longed to witness the spirit of the wolves that had once graced the land—a yearning that set him apart from his kin.

One evening, as the sun began its descent behind the hills, Thomas ventured out onto Wolf Fell alone. His heart pounded with anticipation, and the wind whispered secrets in his ear. He climbed the steep grassy slopes of Parlick, following the path his ancestors had walked countless times.

Finally, he reached the summit, the view stretching out before him in all its grandeur. The moorland sprawled in every direction, a testament to the wildness that still lingered. Thomas felt a surge of awe and reverence for the untamed beauty that surrounded him.

Emboldened by the moment, Thomas pressed on, guided by the fences and gritstone walls that marked the way. He moved with purpose, his steps steady despite the wind's ceaseless assault. The landscape shifted around him as he descended into the peat hags and towards the Bowland valley.

It was there, in the midst of the moorland, that Thomas Procter caught a glimpse of something extraordinary. A pair of piercing eyes stared back at him from the depths of the wilderness. The last wolf of Wolf Fell had revealed itself to him.

In that fleeting encounter, Thomas felt a connection that transcended time and space. He saw the spirit of the wolves in the lone creature before him, the embodiment of the untamed spirit that had once roamed freely across the land.

Word of Thomas's encounter spread throughout the community, reigniting the tales and legends of the wolves of Wolf Fell. The villagers marveled at the Procter family's legacy, their link to a bygone era. And though the last wolf eventually faded into the mists of time, the spirit of the wolves and the indomitable nature of Wolf Fell lived on.

The Procter family continued their stewardship of the land, passing down the stories and traditions from generation to generation. They became the custodians of Wolf Fell, the keepers of its history, and the guardians of its wild soul.

To this day, as visitors explore the enchanting wilderness of Wolf Fell, they can sense the presence of the wolves that once roamed the land. The echoes of their howls and the whispers of the wind serve as a reminder of the enduring bond between the land and those who call it home—the last wolf and the descendants of the Woofus Procters.

By Donald Jay.

The Random Joottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.
Worsthorne Stocks,

In the quaint village of Worsthorne, an ancient relic from Saxon times stood tall and formidable—the stocks. These wooden structures served as a punishment for unruly gamblers and drunkards who had the misfortune of crossing paths with the village constable or churchwarden. Among the miscreants who found themselves in the stocks were three individuals known as Cheetham, Cracker, and Stitch. Please excuse the use of their vernacular names, as during those times, locating someone by their given name was often a challenge. A captivating tale is associated with the stocks in this village, involving a man named Jack Balding. Jack was an ardent admirer of John Barleycorn, but his fondness for alcohol had long surpassed the boundaries of moderation. It was not long before Old Jim o'th Halstead, the village constable, caught Jack red-handed in the act and promptly presented him before the authorities. Consequently, Jack was sentenced to an hour in the stocks as punishment.

Old Jim, exercising his privilege of choosing the hour of Jack's torment, cunningly waited for the perfect opportunity to put a damper on Jack's spirits. He selected a bitterly cold winter's day and proceeded to collar Jack, leading him triumphantly to his frigid fate. With legs elevated at an uncomfortable angle, sitting on a cold flagstone with no reprieve, the hour of punishment seemed anything but pleasant for poor Jack.

Satisfied with his accomplishment, Old Jim locked Jack securely in the stocks and proudly marched away, relishing the thought of a warm and hearty dinner. Left to his own devices, Jack sat there, shivering and miserable, with no hope of warmth or sustenance. However, fortune had a surprise in store for him.

One of Jack's sympathetic friends discreetly slipped a bottle of good old rum into his pocket, the result of a collection made among those who sympathized with his plight. Jack, upon discovering the hidden treasure, wasted no time in indulging in its comforting contents. The warm and inviting liquid brought a momentary respite from the cold, and Jack swiftly descended into a state of blissful oblivion.

Meanwhile, a mischievous onlooker hatched a plan to add some spice to Old Jim's day. Hastily rushing off, as if something terrible had occurred, he arrived at the constable's location breathless with excitement. "Quick! You've finally done it right! Poor Jack has starved to death. You're sure to be hanged for subjecting him to this freezing day," he exclaimed dramatically. Dropping his knife and fork in alarm, Old Jim replied, "Surely, you're not telling the truth?" "I swear it! Come and see for yourself," the mischievous informant retorted.

Without a second thought, the worried constable dashed off to investigate the dire situation. Upon reaching the stocks, he gingerly lifted Jack's heavy head, only to have it thud back down with a resounding thwack when he released his grip. A crowd had gathered, reveling in the comedic turn of events, though Old Jim's thoughts were consumed by visions of Lancaster Castle and his imminent punishment.

Desperately, he cried out, "What on earth should I do?"

"Get him some brandy!" shouted one helpful bystander. "Hurry, bring him to the lower pub. We'll give him the best we have, and I'll foot the bill," suggested another, a mischievous smile playing on his lips.

The constable wasted no time in accepting their advice. Jack, now hoisted high on their shoulders, was carried to the designated establishment. In no time at all, the room at the Bay Horse pub echoed with merry laughter at the expense of Old Jim o'th' Halstead.

And so, amidst the raucous merriment, the constable learned a valuable lesson about the power of rumors and the unpredictable nature of circumstances. The stocks, once an instrument of punishment, became the catalyst for an amusing tale that would be shared and chuckled over for years to come in the village of Worsthorne.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Worsthorne, The Old Wapentake Law

In the quiet village of Worsthorne, nestled amidst rolling hills and picturesque landscapes, a peculiar law known as the Old Wapentake Law held sway. This archaic decree, originating from the Feudal Court at Clitheroe Castle, governed the entire Honour of Clitheroe, a vast district in England. Under this law, a creditor burdened by a debt of £1 19s. 11 1/2 d. could seek redress by invoking a wapentake.

The wapentake was a summons issued by the creditor and delivered by a bailiff of the Court. It authorized the seizure of property from the debtor's home as evidence of the debt's acknowledgement. Commonly, items such as furniture or household utensils were taken, serving as tangible proof of the process.

Within the humble abode of a small cottage known as "The Kell," resided an old man and his only son. The son possessed a robust, muscular physique but had the unfortunate affliction of being both deaf and dumb. Together, they engaged in the profitable trades of pig-ringing and mole-catching, their livelihood in this tranquil corner of the world.

However, fate cast its shadow upon them as they found themselves ensnared by debt to their local grocer. In response, two bailiffs from Clitheroe arrived at their door, armed with a wapentake. Casually tossing the legal document onto the table, they proceeded to claim the old kettle resting in the corner, deeming it a satisfactory item for their purpose.

The son, being the sole occupant of the cottage when the bailiffs appeared, struggled to comprehend the unfolding situation. Pondering his next move, a brilliant idea dawned upon him. Swiftly rising from his seat, he stealthily locked the bailiffs inside the house, securing the key within his own pocket.

Drawing his father's pig-ringing apparatus from the wall, he grasped one of the bailiffs firmly by the hair, pinning his head between his powerful knees. The mute Sampson, his strength amplified by his silent determination, held the bailiff in an unyielding vice-like grip. Meanwhile, the other bailiff rushed to assist his comrade, but his efforts were in vain as he received a solid blow to his nose, leaving him dazed and disoriented.

Amidst a chorus of muffled protests and indignant snorts from the captive bailiff, the mute son skillfully bored a hole through the bailiff's nose, affixing a ring to it—a painful memento of this unusual encounter. Meanwhile, the other bailiff, witnessing this unexpected turn of events and fearing a similar fate, made a swift decision. Without hesitation, he crashed through the nearest window, shattering the glass and frame as he made his frantic escape, displaying an intense aversion to sharing his colleague's predicament.

The tale of this extraordinary incident quickly spread throughout Worsthorne and its neighboring villages, becoming a legend whispered by the locals around hearth fires. The young man's resourcefulness, despite his communication challenges, became a symbol of courage and ingenuity.

As time passed, the Old Wapentake Law lost its grip on the region, gradually fading into obscurity. Yet, the memory of the brave deaf and dumb hero of Worsthorne remained, a testament to the indomitable spirit that thrived within the hearts of its people—a spirit capable of overcoming any obstacle, be it a wapentake or the limitations of the human condition.

By Donald Jay

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

Wycoller Hall at Christmas

At Wycoller Hall, nestled amidst the rolling hills of the English countryside, a time-honored tradition took place each year. As the winter winds whispered through the ancient walls, the family threw open their doors for twelve days of festive revelry during Christmas.

The heart of the celebration was the grand hall, a magnificent space adorned with intricate ashlar work. A long table stretched across the hall, laden with a feast fit for kings. Platters of fragrant roasted beef, succulent roast goose, and a steaming pudding adorned the table, surrounded by bowls of nourishing frumenty made from husked wheat. The air was filled with the tantalizing aromas of the feast, enticing the guests with their irresistible allure.

As the morning sun cast its warm glow, the family gathered around the table, eager to partake in the bountiful meal. They sat together, sharing stories and laughter, filling the hall with joyous chatter. Glasses were raised in toasts of gratitude, and the clinking of silverware provided a symphony of anticipation.

After the sumptuous feast, the family retreated to the cozy corner of the hall, where a roundabout fire-place crackled and flickered. Stone benches encircled the hearth, providing comfort and warmth to those who gathered around. The young folks settled upon the benches, their eyes sparkling with excitement.

In this intimate setting, they cracked nuts and shared laughter, finding delight in the simplest of pleasures. They entertained one another with riddles and tales, their voices mingling with the gentle crackling of the fire. It was here, in this cherished space, that something magical happened each year.

As the days of celebration passed, the sons and daughters of Wycoller Hall discovered a subtle enchantment. The crackling fire, the shared laughter, and the stories spun around the hearth wove invisible threads of connection between them. They began to see one another in a different light, finding comfort and familiarity in their shared traditions.

Their hearts opened, and friendships blossomed into something more. Eyes met across the fire, hands brushed while cracking nuts, and laughter turned into shared whispers. The sons and daughters of Wycoller Hall found love, their affections quietly blooming amidst the warmth of the hearth.

In this enchanting atmosphere, they found their matches, their hearts intertwined without having to venture far from home. Love grew in the nooks and crannies of Wycoller Hall, nurtured by the bonds forged by generations past. The ancient walls echoed with the laughter and joy of young love, a testament to the power of tradition and the magic of connection.

And so, as the twelve days of Christmas came to a close, Wycoller Hall stood as a testament to the enduring power of family and love. The young couples, their hearts aflame with newfound affection, carried the spirit of the hall with them into the world beyond. They vowed to return each year, to relive the magic and share the stories of their own happily ever afters.

Wycoller Hall, steeped in history and love, remained a beacon of warmth and joy, a place where the spirit of Christmas and the bonds of family would forever be cherished. And though time marched on, the echoes of laughter and the whispers of love continued to dance within its hallowed halls, reminding all who passed through its doors that true happiness could be found in the simplest of moments.

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Ali Ashgar, from Nelson

Years passed, and the brutal murder of Ali Asghar remained a haunting mystery in the town of Nelson. The community felt the weight of the unsolved crime, with whispers of fear and suspicion lingering in the air. While life moved forward, the memory of Ali Asghar's tragic end refused to fade away.

Two decades later, in the year 2006, a new detective named Sarah Thompson joined the Nelson Police Department. Sarah was determined and had an unwavering belief in justice. As she familiarized herself with the town's history, she stumbled upon the cold case file of Ali Asghar's murder. The unsolved mystery caught her attention, sparking a fire within her to bring closure to the grieving family.

With fresh eyes and a renewed determination, Sarah delved deep into the investigation. She meticulously reviewed the evidence, re-interviewed witnesses, and reached out to the community for any potential leads. Sarah's passion for justice resonated with the townsfolk, who saw hope in her efforts. They came forward, offering snippets of information and their own theories, hoping to aid in the resolution of the case.

Days turned into weeks, and weeks into months, as Sarah tirelessly pursued the truth. She connected the dots between past leads, cross-referenced files, and uncovered crucial details that had been overlooked years ago. Slowly but surely, a clearer picture of that fateful night began to emerge.

Sarah's investigation led her to a retired police officer named Tom Davies, who had worked on the case when it first occurred. Tom had since left the force, disillusioned by the lack of progress.

However, Sarah's passion reignited his own desire for justice. Together, they formed an unlikely alliance, combining their knowledge and experience.

Revisiting the crime scene, Sarah and Tom discovered new forensic techniques that had emerged over the years. With the help of advanced technology, they were able to reexamine the evidence collected at the time. DNA samples were retested, and previously unidentifiable fingerprints were now traceable.

As the investigation gained momentum, a breakthrough came in the form of a previously unidentified fingerprint found on a discarded piece of clothing from the crime scene. Sarah tirelessly pursued this lead, cross-referencing it with databases and conducting interviews to find a match.

Months of dedicated work finally paid off when the fingerprint matched a known criminal named David Harris. Sarah and Tom swiftly apprehended him, and under intense questioning, Harris eventually revealed the truth. He confessed to his involvement in Ali Asghar's murder, providing detailed accounts of the events that unfolded that tragic night.

With the newfound evidence and Harris's confession, the case against the other three assailants swiftly came together. Through relentless pursuit, Sarah and Tom managed to track down the remaining culprits, ensuring that justice would finally be served.

In the courtroom, the community gathered, their eyes filled with anticipation and a mix of emotions. As the judge pronounced the four men guilty, a collective sigh of relief echoed through the room. Ali Asghar's family, who had carried the burden of their loss for so long, found solace in the knowledge that their loved one's killers would be held accountable.

The conviction brought a sense of closure to the town of Nelson. The community's faith in justice was restored, and they celebrated Sarah Thompson and Tom Davies as heroes. Their unwavering dedication and perseverance had cracked a case that had haunted them for decades.

The memory of Ali Asghar would forever be engraved in the hearts of the townspeople. They vowed to cherish his memory, transforming the tragedy into a reminder of the importance of unity and the pursuit of justice. And as life in Nelson moved forward, a newfound sense of security and trust blossomed, healing the wounds left behind by an unsolved crime.

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Young Man Ainsdale - Road to Birkdale Haunting Manifestation .

A woman driving home from work spotted a young man standing on the roadside. The man waved at her before vanishing.

The day had been long and tiring for Sarah. As dusk settled over the town of Ainsdale, she found herself eager to leave her office and head home. With weary eyes and a heavy heart, she started her car and began the familiar drive along the winding road that led to Birkdale, her place of solace.

The road stretched out before her, bathed in the fading light of the setting sun. The air was crisp, and a sense of unease seemed to linger, as if the very atmosphere held a secret. Sarah tried to shake off the feeling, attributing it to her exhaustion and the stories she had heard about this particular stretch of road.

As she neared a bend, her eyes caught a glimpse of movement on the side of the road. Startled, she glanced over and saw a young man standing there. He was dressed in old-fashioned attire, his clothes resembling those worn in the early 1900s. His pale face held an expression of sadness mixed with longing.

Curiosity overcame Sarah, and she slowed her car to a stop, trying to make sense of what she was seeing. The young man's eyes met hers, and he raised his hand, giving her a faint wave. His lips mouthed words she couldn't decipher, and before she could react, he vanished into thin air, as though he had never been there at all.

A shiver ran down Sarah's spine as she stared at the empty spot where the young man had stood just moments ago. Fear and confusion filled her mind, and she hesitated before deciding to continue her journey home, her heart pounding in her chest.

Over the next few weeks, Sarah couldn't shake off the encounter from her thoughts. She found herself haunted by the image of the young man, his ghostly appearance forever etched in her memory. Determined to uncover the truth, she began delving into the history of the area, hoping to find answers.

Through her research, Sarah discovered that the road she traveled on was once a bustling path that connected Ainsdale to Birkdale in the early 20th century. Tragically, it was also the site of a fatal accident that claimed the life of a young man named Thomas, who bore an uncanny resemblance to the apparition she had seen.

Legend had it that Thomas had been waiting for his fiancée on that fateful day, ready to start a new life together. However, she never arrived, and as the hours stretched on, he became desperate. In a moment of despair, Thomas ran onto the road, only to be struck by a passing vehicle, forever sealing his fate.

Haunted by this revelation, Sarah felt a deep sadness for the lost soul she had encountered. With a newfound determination, she returned to the roadside where she had seen the ghostly figure. In the stillness of the night, she whispered words of comfort and apology, hoping to bring solace to Thomas' tormented spirit.

Days turned into weeks, and Sarah's encounters with the apparition ceased. The road to Birkdale became just a road once more, devoid of the supernatural presence that had gripped her with fear.

Though she couldn't say for certain if her actions had brought peace to Thomas' soul, she felt a sense of closure within herself.

From that day forward, Sarah carried with her the memory of the young man and the reminder of how fleeting life could be. And as she drove along the road to Birkdale, she couldn't help but glance at the spot where she had seen Thomas, grateful for the lessons learned from her encounter with the otherworldly.

By Donald Jay